DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 048 403 UD 011 335

AUTHOR Parsons, Tim
TITLE The Community School Movement. Community Issues, December 1970.
INSTITUTION City Univ. of New York, Flushing, N.Y. Inst. for Community Studies.
PUB DATE Dec 70
NOTE 79p.

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Problems, Black Community, *Community Control, Community Influence, *Community Schools, *Financial Support, Inner City, Parent Participation, *Parent School Relationship, Private Schools, Public Schools, *School Community Programs, School Community Relationship, Teacher Attitudes, Urban Schools

ABSTRACT

Between the summer of 1968 and May 1969, 30 community controlled school projects were studied. Observations of community school curricula, community involvement and integration, and the like are summarized. Strategies for control are grouped under the same three structures utilized in the three chapters of project profiles: public school subsystems, independent community schools, and minority-controlled State school districts. Within public systems are found such strategies as direct pressure, utilizing broad Federal and State programs, enlisting under university auspices, accenting innovation, finding new resources, and bargaining. Seventeen projects representing efforts to transform a regular public school program into one in which greater control is exercised by the parents, residents and/or students of the school community are described. Independent community schools competing with public schools for funds were studied in four major cities. Minority controlled State school districts in Michigan, Texas, and California are summarily described. The last chapter, "The Future: The Support and Spread of Community Schools," includes the following: "A Model: Small Parent-Controlled Public Schools"; a discussion of the broader needs of community school development; and a summary of major recommendations. (JM)

ED048403

community issues

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY STUDIES QUEENS COLLEGE

December 1970 City University of New York

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

The Community School Movement

by Tim Parsons

UD011335

ED 048403

Tim Parsons is an urban education specialist in the New Jersay State Department of Education. A graduate of Amherst and Bank Street he is a doctoral candidate at Union Graduate school. Mr. Parsons was formerly a consultant with the Institute and this work was supported by the Institute and the Taconic Foundation.

Acknowledgement

Lorraine Maxwell and Trevor Walker, former consultants to the Institute, helped me gather data on community schools when we visit most of these schools throughout the nation. I should also like to thank the Institute for Community Studies, the Taconic Foundation and the Ford Foundation for furnishing the funds to make these visits, and to the Institute for publishing this paper.

I am especially indebted to the many individuals in community school projects who have helped me to learn about their efforts.

T.P.

© Copyright, Institute for Community Studies, Queens College, C.U.N.Y.

INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY STUDIES

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Institute for Community Studies, C.U.N.Y.
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

Marilyn Gittell
Director

Maurice R. Berube
Publications Director

INTRODUCING:
THIRTY "COMMUNITY CONTROLLED SCHOOL" PROJECTS

Although the basic idea of local control and individual responsibility is central to the American ideal, massive corporations, unions and governmental units have taken us far from the individual entrepreneur, craftsman and one room school house. Increasing numbers of poor people, as well as disaffected middle class youth, are struggling to alter large impersonal American institutions or establish alternative structures.[1]

The 30 community controlled school projects described here are almost all located in predominantly low income, minority group communities. They are distinguished from the middle class free schools in that the thrust has come from people who traditionally have lacked both significant control and options in the formal education they or their children engage in. This thrust has evolved in three basic structures: 1) quasi-independent community school or programs within public school systems, 2) independent community schools, and 3) minority controlled existing state school districts. Although the independent community schools are non-public in their source of funding, all are "public" in the sense that they are generally open to all children on a first-come, first-served basis without a required tuition screening out the poorest children.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY-CONTROLLED SCHOOL?

In brief, a community-controlled school is a school in which parents, students or residents who form a self-defined "community" previously lacking control exert extensive decision-making power over the policies of the school or schools serving that community. Some explanations are needed:

COMMUNITY

"Community" is the crucial word which separates this new form of school from most instances of "local control." Living within large "local" districts are many groups of people who have lost or never had any significant control over and responsibility for the local public school. The size of the self-defined "community" can vary widely from a large area with a connection by name and a sense of shared needs—such as Harlem or Watts—to a small group of parents living on one block or students attending one high school.[2]

Controversy has frequently arisen over the question of who speaks for "the community." Early stages in the formation of a project may center on outspoken self-appointed leaders who demonstrate the greatest concern for basic change in the schools.[3] Most of the projects described in this report have then evolved toward community or parent elections of a board.

---

[1] It is no mere coincidence that many middle class youth, alienated by their own mass production schools and mass society, are among the strongest advocates of community control. It is striking to compare the rapid spread of small community schools or districts, free schools and communes with the acceleration in development of conglomerates by the established business community, the development of the consolidated "superagencies" in government, and the continued interest in metropolitanism among political theorists in universities. A polarization among Americans on the issue of size and responsiveness of institutions versus efficiency is central to growing support of alternative institutions as expressions of a burgeoning "counter-culture."

[2] The definition of community for these projects is sometimes made by or negotiated with an external power which sets ground rules for the schools. The danger of artificially forming a district in an area which lacks a sense of community is best exemplified by the Two Bridges District in New York City (see Chapter III).

[3] Often resistent professionals, parents and community residents have chosen to examine the motivation of these self-appointed leaders rather than weigh the merits of their proposals.

CONTROL

To exercise control is to have the power to make decisions which will govern significant aspects of the schools' operations. *None* of the projects in this report have *total* control, just as local districts in this country do not exert total control. Publicly supported projects confront the potential of a higher level veto, review or even takeover [4] as well as state laws setting minimum standards and restricting or prescribing certain actions. Independent community schools may be limited by shortage of funds, local fire and building codes and state laws setting minimum certification or other standards for non-public schools.

Many of the community or parent groups in public sub-systems are so limited in their powers that their projects are best described as "efforts" for community control. They are included in this report more because of their commitment to gaining greater control than their actual wielding of power at present. They can be distinguished from most "advisory committees" in their unwilligness to accept most professional staff decisions or high level vetoes which are contrary to community interests. They have and frequently take recourse to direct pressure, legal or political action to oppose an unpopular decision imposed on them.

Major areas in which decision-making powers may be exerted include hiring and firing of staff, planning or approval of program and curriculum, granting of contracts for construction, maintenance and repairs, determination of size and allocation of a budget. Some or most of these powers may be delegated to the staff *by parents* under the principle of community control. However, this should not be confused with cases of bureaucratic "decentralization" in which powers are assigned *directly* to professionals at a local level by a central board or superintendent.

SCHOOL

A number of the projects described here contain more than a single school (a complex, federation, district or sub-system); other projects are programs encompassing some grades or classrooms within a school (the Follow Through parent-implemented programs). Because of these varying structures, the terms "projects", "programs", "school" or "schools" are alternately used in describing the projects.

Another term used increasingly by schools which are or are attempting to become community-controlled is "community school." Some confusion arises from this due to the earlier usage of "community school" to designate schools in which many programs serving diverse community interests are included.[5] Although community-controlled schools also tend to develop a variety of programs serving the community, the distinguishing feature of all "community schools" described in this report is the increased decision-making powers exercised by parents and community.

CHAPTER I:
A SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

Each community school has its own unique history, curriculum, and structure. Yet, there are a number of clear generalizations which emerge from an overview of the thirty projects.

---

[4] As exercised in Florida in the Spring of 1970 by Governor Claude Kirk.
[5] Mainly initiated by the Mott Foundation of Flint, Michigan, these "community schools" have often been criticized by community-control advocates for the patronizing manner in which the programs *serving* the community are planned, controlled and implemented by professionals. Community advisory committees usually have little or no power in staff selection or program design.

OBSERVATIONS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOL CURRICULA

1. Parents Support Innovative Approaches.

Many educators fear that low income parents will choose repressive, traditional classroom approaches and shun new, more effective methods for learning. It is often true that militant and community residents attack educators for "experimenting with our kids."

The great amount of innovation present in the schools described in this study strongly indicates that parents want new approaches when *they* are in the position of choosing them and are assured the power to alter the programs if they find that their children are being hurt by them. Experimentation-innovation is often viewed as manipulation when exerted by professional educators not accountable to parents. The same militants who are the usual opponents of this "manipulation" when externally controlled are often the activist board members of the community schools who have chosen to implement innovative programs "to help our children learn."

2. Parents choose a great variety of innovative approaches, often based on a newly emerging view of their children as learners and a new philosophy of education. Most approaches are individualized.

Parents have selected a wide variety of innovative approaches. Some accent development of skills, some stress personal-social development; most combine both areas. Generally, all efforts lead to greater individualized learning. This has centered on the use of more personnel, particularly community residents, rather than a stress on machines and technology.

Many parents deeply involved in setting directions of schools are developing a new view of their children as reflected in a child-oriented philosophy of education. This is especially evident in small independent community schools where an active dialogue occurs between young parents and young staff with new ideas based on a new vision of the world. Though not a single vision, it contains the common strains of cooperation before competition, sharing above consuming, and personal and small group communication rather than bureaucratic procedures and structures. Not as unstructured as many free schools, these community schools have nevertheless moved far from traditional public school programs.

3. The curriculum bias is toward open classrooms or the Leicestershire approach.

Within the variety of innovative approaches to classroom organization and curriculum, the most widely adopted or borrowed from model is the Leicestershire approach developed in British infant schools. More recently educators have begun to use the term "open classroom" or "open education" for this and similar approaches which stress allowing the individual child to explore his own interests and best paths to learning by choosing among a variety of activities. Classes usually are vertically grouped; that is, each classroom includes children of at least two or three different age levels. Classes often follow an "integrated day" format; that is, the child chooses what subject he wishes to pursue at what time of the day or day of the week. Lectures on one subject or skill are eliminated; even small teacher-organized group work tends to disappear in favor of individual projects or student-initiated cooperative projects.

The majority of the independent community schools follow variations of the "open classroom" approach; a half-dozen of the publicly supported projects include classrooms experimenting with similar approaches.

4. The most extensive classroom changes are evident in the smaller projects/schools.

Basic departures from the traditional lecture-teaching, rote-learning structured total class activities are evident in nearly every classroom of the small independent community schools and projects involving less than approximately five hundred children. Traditional classrooms and teachers, though diminishing in numbers, still constitute the majority in the larger districts in which control by parents is quite limited in decision-making power and/or funds.

OBSERVATIONS OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND INTEGRATION

1. Parent and community involvement is much more extensive in community schools. The small projects and schools have a significantly higher percentage of their parents deeply involved.

The contrast between the typical public school and community schools generally increases greatly as the community schools or projects decrease in size. Though approximately the same number of parents may be active with the various programs, this means a much higher *percentage* of parents involved in the small programs. A great variety of ways in which parents can participate has been developed in community schools. (For examples, see especially the East Harlem Block Schools sketch in Chapter IV).

2. Community-controlled schools utilize community resources, especially personnel, much more extensively than most inner-city schools.

Not only have these projects been the leaders in hiring greater numbers of personnel who live in the immediate community (who are often parents) but also they have used these employees in a great variety of roles. Not restricted to the traditional role of an aide who patrols the halls and lunchroom or does the teacher's clerical work, these community people make home visits, raise funds, act as full teaching assistants or partners in the classrooms, and sometimes as regular teachers. Great stress has been placed on training and new career opportunities as well as natural partnerships with or supervision by professionals. Again the smaller independent schools and Follow-Through projects have generally utilized community personnel more extensively, considering their size, than the larger districts.

3. More integration of staff and/or student bodies is found in community controlled schools than in regular public schools. Where no integration of student bodies is possible in either community or regular schools, the community boards are generally receptive to integration.

Widespread efforts to select black administrators for those projects and schools serving predominantly black students have led to some conclusions and fears which are not supported by reality. Community boards have generally selected their leaders with a strong view toward providing the students with a success model from their own race. Yet most of the independent community schools which are located in areas where public schools are totally segregated have moderately integrated (a rate averaging about 80 : 20) student bodies. Their faculties usually include nearly equal representation from minority and majority groups. Public community school projects also generally have integrated staffs, selected according to ability and willingness to work with parents and community residents. The many white union teachers who left the Ocean Hill-Brownsville and IS 201 demonstration districts in New York City were mostly replaced by white teachers. Although parents in newly won positions of control in community schools or districts do not want to relinquish this control to white control—via bureaucracy or an influx of white parents—many indicate their openness to adding white students.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS:

1. Professional educators hired by parents often experience a basic change in attitude: A chance for parent-professional partnership.

Many teachers and administrators who have been interviewed by parent personnel committees praise the depth and perceptiveness of the questions asked by parents. They often compare these interviews with those conducted by harried or facile professional administrators who have no direct stake in the children's education. In contrast to the large New York City demonstration districts where teachers were initially inherited rather than hired by the community boards, teachers hired by parent boards often speak of a new respect for parents.

Though they must prove they can work with parents and tenure often is not guaranteed, professionals in small community schools generally have greater rather than less power to implement new ideas in their classrooms. Because of this, community schools may be the best path to the situation in which both parents and teachers feel increased control over their lives and jobs. A real parent-professional partnership has already emerged in some community schools.

2. Bureaucratic demands and power struggles are generally a continuing problem for publicly funded projects. One consistent exception is the Follow Through Program.

The most widely known struggles have faced the three locally funded demonstration districts in New York City. However, even efforts designed to avoid traditional educational bureaucracy by creating a new state district (CCED in Massachusetts) or a federally funded model district (Anacostia in Washington, D.C.) have faced many bureaucratic obstacles. Consistently escaping the damning criticism is the Follow Through program funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity and administered by the Office of Education. A rare group of administrators of this program has been able to fund independent community schools and "parent-implemented" projects within public systems without imposing the usually crippling red tape. Their main expectation has been that the parents have significant powers in designing and controlling the program. Although a few criticism are heard of the standardized evaluations administered to children in each project, most local projects praise the administration of Follow Through and contrast it with other publicly funded programs. Follow Through provides a model for those seeking to use federal funds to promote true local participation and control rather than further centralization. It is an answer to those federal legislators and administrators who pretend to support "local control" by advocating block grants of federal funds to the states, knowing that the state bureaucracies are usually less supportive than the federal bureaucracy of innovation and the needs of low income communities.

3. In most inner city areas, alternative institutions outside the regular public systems are the only place where basic change occurs.

Small independent community schools, no matter how successful ,are ignored by most public school educators because they involve only a small percentage of the many children of low income families enrolled in schools. However, such a small proportion of inner city public school children are "successfully educated," even by the public schools' own standards, that the number of children presently enrolled in independent community schools in New York, Boston and Milwaukee are already quite significant. Though improvement is evident in some publicly-funded community control efforts, progress is severely limited by bureaucratic opposition and the ever-present difficulties

7

created for parents and professionals alike who attempt to function within large systems. Small scale community schools within public systems are likely to be successful only where an unusual amount of control is relinquished to or captured by parents. School systems where this is likely to occur appear to be rare.

The consistent superiority of independent community schools in the areas of parent involvement, student attitudes toward learning, and use of community resources suggests that public aid to community schools or a parent voucher system is the most promising direction for most cities.

AN OBSERVATION IN NEED OF MORE RESEARCH

Achievement in community schools is equal or superior to public schools with similar student populations. The strengths of many community schools are not measureable by traditional tests.

Allthough early reports from the few schools which utilize achievement tests are positive, it is certainly much too early to reach a conclusion. The danger, in fact, is that foundations and the Congress will want firm results too quickly and in the traditional form of test scores. The rapid turnover of "unsuccessful" experiments in American schools is probably due more to the fact that we don't allow them to establish themselves before evaluating them than it is due to shortcomings in the new idea. Trial time is particularly important for community schools in which the governance of the school and the relationship between parents and professionals is radically altered. There is always an extended "shake-down" period in any new school whether controlled by parents, professionals or both.

Reports of decreased vandalism, eagerness to learn, improved attendance and an elimination of pupil suspensions are more significant measures at this early time than achievement scores. In the long run, the child's and his family's feeling of control over their own lives is certainly vital in this increasingly complex world. Academic skills are only one element helpful in maintaining a sense of control. The actual daily practice of sharing in the control of one's own life, schools and other institutions is at least as significant.

CHAPTER II:
STRATEGIES FOR CONTROL

All strategies utilized by the thirty-one projects have a central goal of shifting control from often detached administrators, politicians and sources of funds to parents, students and community residents with a direct stake in the services reaching them. Community control advocates are assisted in gaining some control by allied "power brokers" who have access to funding sources and to those people and groups who traditionally have held control of educational institutions. Resistance to the shift of control has come primarily from groups of professional educators who have only recently gained a considerable share of control themselves. This resistance has led a number of community control advocates to establish independent schools in which direct control of non-public funds at least temporarily by-passes the need to wrest control from those who currently hold it. (Although a shortage of non-public funds will probably force some confrontation in the long-run.)

The strategies are grouped under the same three structures utilized in the three chapters of project profiles: 1) public school subsystems, 2) independent community

schools, and 3) minority-controlled state school districts. Each community control effort has utilized a strategy suited to conditions in its local community or city. Though distinct strategies are evident, most local efforts represent a combination of strategies.

I. STRATEGIES WITHIN PUBLIC SYSTEMS

1. Direct Pressure

The impact of direct action cannot be measured merely by counting the numerous schools and districts where boycotts, picketing and unilateral community actions have increased community and parent influence over the operation of the school or district. Direct action has been the amplifier of the message that "the community must be reckoned with." Many educational administrators have heard and redesigned their programs or schools to include significant community involvement in decision-making. Balancing this to a varying extent in different cities is the fear of frepercussions from too much action. Almost always the fearful are cautiously aware of the professionals. The comfortable parent-professional alliance often present in the independent community schools must be contrasted with the suspicions or contentious relationship in most public school projects. (With time and the hiring of more teachers and supervisors by the community board this diminishes.)

In the case of the New York City Demonstration Districts the change resisting professional groups appear to have been ultimately successful in crippling—and terminating—the projects. Important power brokers in New York were Mario Fantini* and the Ford Foundation which played a crucial early role in convincing Superintendent Donovan and the Board of Education to give the districts an initial trial. Although the dramatic action on the community level usually attracts the publicity and attention, the action of the brokers and even hesitant receptiveness of the power holders are also necessary to success.

2. Utilizing Broad Federal and State Programs

A number of projects have used funds from federal programs which include ambiguous provisions for citizen participation. Just as many state and local school districts have been able to interpret these provisions narrowly, it is quite possible for community groups to interpret them broadly. Once the funds of one program are likely to be secured, this promise may be used as a lever to gain further money from other federal programs as well as the concurrence and/or support of the local school district. Examples of this strategy are found in Dayton (Model Cities funds pressured the local system), Rough Rock (OEO funds brought Bureau of Indian Affairs concurrence), Newark (Department of Labor's Concentrated Employment Program and New Jersey Research and Demonstration funding led to local school board cooperation), and Chicago (ESEA Title III Great Cities Funding involved local cooperation).

3. Enlisting Under University Auspices

Board of Education members and superintendents are often reassured by a project which proposes to include a college or university as a partner. Not anxious to maintain control indefinitely, the university may relinquish power to the community in time. In one case the institution has exerted diminishing power in the project (WESP in Chicago) as the community representatives make known their desire for further control. In another instance (the Morgan School), Antioch College withdrew from the realm of control completely but continues to provide technical assistance and manpower.

* An Education Program Officer of the Ford Foundation at that time.

9

4. Accent Innovation

Emphasis on some curricular innovations in a program which is to have significant community decision-making has succeeded in gaining support from unlikely professional and school board sources in Massachusetts (CCED) and Washington (the Anacostia Project). The Massachusetts project also gathered support by being billed as a means to further integration without forced bussing. In both projects a legislative body had to be convinced of the popularity of their action in creating districts.

5. Finding New Resources

Just as federal or state funds can be utilized as a spur to gain local support, so can funds and resources from private sources. Students wishing to create the Eastern High School Freedom School in Washington, D.C., raised nearly fifty thousand dollars in donations from private sources. Combined with a similar amount from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the new School impressed the Washington Public schools sufficiently to gain accreditation for the courses it offered. Some administrators within the Washington public school system now advocate supporting similar schools with local public funds.

6. Working from "Within" the System

A critical person or group of people located strategically within a broadly defined federal program can exert influence on its administrators which leads to the funding of community control projects. The best examples are the parent-implemented Follow Through projects, again the ESEA Title III Great Cities project in Chicago and the Anacostia project in Washington (all are described in Chapter III). The legislation which authorizes these programs is broad and stresses citizen involvement and innovation. There are other Office of Economic Opportunity and education programs which offer similar opportunities. Also the Office of Education is now attempting to generate legislation authorizing a fifteen to twenty-five million dollar experimental schools program. It may emerge as a parallel to the Follow Through "planned variation" design. One or more of those variations could be community controlled.

7. The Bargaining Technique

Ask for a great deal and the compromise may still involve a significant degree of community control. The best example is the request by Adams-Morgan parents for community control of *both* neighborhood schools; the Superintendent in Washington initially agreed that community control could be tried in *one.*

II. INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Most groups of parents who have begun independent community schools initially conceive a school in which they have full decision-making power but may have found they had to compromise it away somewhat in the process of acquiring the funds necessary to operate the school. The power holders in this case are those foundations, individuals or programs with money to give when and if the school meets their standards, hopes, expectations, etc. The power brokers are usually the professional director or fund raiser hired by the parents to interpret their goals in such a way that they will be palatable to those with money. Since these schools do not require tuition from their students (who generally come from low income families), they are dependent upon outside funds combined with volunteered community resources.

As the number of independent community schools increases, a shortage of readily available non-public funds has forced these schools to explore possible sources of public

funds. Maintenance of most of their control which comes with small size and independence is a crucial element in their consideration of funding alternatives. Emerging strategies, introduced below, are discussed further in Chapter IV:

1. Federations of Independent Schools

The joining of independent community schools, as in Boston and Milwaukee, can lead to a coordinated effort for funding or the establishment of a base of power to which the public schools must respond and change.

2. Support of State Aid to Non-public Schools

Approximately a dozen states have passed or are considering legislation to provide direct aid to non-public schools. Although the laws have been designed to avoid the Constitutional question of separation of church and state, they may face a court challenge in the future. Meanwhile most independent community schools would favor enactment of aid to non-public school laws in their own states.[1]

3. Court Action

One independent community school has filed a suit in state court to demand a share of the public education funds. They contend that the regular public schools fail to provide a quality integrated education guaranteed by law. The argument concludes that as parents, they have the right to send their children to a school which provides a quality, integrated education (i.e. their independent community school) and have public funds to pay for it.

4. The Proliferation of Pre-Schools

As more parent-controlled programs are established on the pre-school level (where less restricted funds are available if the public school monopoly hasn't extended itself to this level), the parents in control tend to raise their expectations for their children. When their children enter public school, the parents may well already be organized sufficiently to demand more responsive public schools, a basic structural change such as a voucher system, or set up additional independent community schools.

5. A Parent Voucher System

A radical plan to alter educational funding by placing control of funds in the hands of each child's parent through a voucher (redeemable for a year's education at any school meeting minimum standards) has been studied by the Center for Policy Studies at Harvard University. Early reports propose means of dealing with frequent criticism leveled at voucher systems, e.g., increased segregation and the required separation of church and state. The Office of Economic Opportunity plans to fund an experimental voucher program beginning in the 1971-72 school year.[2] A similar system has been in operation in Denmark for over twenty years.

III. MINORITY CONTROLLED STATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

No pre-planned strategy was necessary to create a number of minority-controlled state school districts. They are a natural result of America's deeply engrained racism which restricts most blacks, Indians, and Spanish-speaking people to formally or informally agree upon "reservations."

---

[1] See *Education Vouchers: A Preliminary Report on Financing Education by Payments to Parents*, Center for the Study of Public Policy, Cambridge, Massachusetts: March 1970, pp. 197-218. This is an excellent summary of existing and proposed state aid to non-public schools.

[2] *Education Vouchers: A Preliminary Report on Financing Education by Payments to Parents*, Center for the Study of Public Policy, Cambridge, Massachusetts: March 1970.

ERIC

Although the minority controlled districts exercise the same degree of local control under the law as other state districts, they are severely limited in actual control by a chronic shortage of funds. In addition to reaching out for as much federal money as possible, these districts are looking to the courts for the establishment of a state equalization formula which will provide them with a fair share of state education monies. Two of the districts described in this report are involved in court suits which press for funding that provides "equal protection under the law."

Within each of the minority controlled districts other actions have been taken to broaden control and participation to a greater number of district parents and residents. In some cases committees with community representation have a role in staff selection and future planning; in others, community groups use direct pressure to influence or change decisions. In one district, concerned residents have developed a dual strategy: work for the election of a more community-minded public Board of Education *and* establish an independent community school.

CHAPTER III

THE PROJECTS: PUBLIC SUBSYSTEMS

"Public schools belong to the public" is the often-heard battle cry of local residents who try to make the regular neighborhood public school more responsive to its community. The seventeen projects described in this chapter represent efforts to transform a regular public school program into one in which greater control is exercised by the parents, residents and/or students of the school community.

INDIGENOUS VERSUS GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

A distinction should be made between those projects which were primarily initiated by indigenous community pressures and those devised by governmental administrators. Although even the government designed projects clearly come as a response to the activist clamor for a greater community control, this response is not always to the specific community from which the pressure is coming. Rather, experimental model projects are established to test the idea of community control.

A parallel can be seen in the establishment of independent countries that were formerly colonies: Areas which organized and fought for their independence had already developed a mechanism for some decision-making and had begun some definition of its leadership. Other former colonies (granted independence by a Mother country which feared future development of resistance or became convinced independence was in its own self interest) usually started their countries with fewer preconceptions, less-developed leadership and governing structure, and less dislike for the former establishment. As with former colonies, community control projects represent many variations in early development from physical confrontations with representatives of the establishment, to a combined movement on community and establishment levels, to no prior local organizing efforts.

INDIGENOUS

Among those projects initiated primarily by work and pressure of parents, students or local community residents, three general structures emerge at the core of their early strategies: 1) those projects organized around a single existing local school, 2) projects planned and developed as a new form of local school to be supported by

public funds, and 3) those established as a sub-system or complex of community schools. There is nearly equal utilization of each structure.

Existing Local School

Intermediate School 201 (later grew to a complex)
The Morgan School (Adams School added later)
Sayre Junior High School

New School

The Rough Rock Demonstration School
The Eastern High School Freedom School
The Springfield Avenue Community School
Committee for Community Education Development

Sub-system or Complex

Ocean Hill-Brownsville
Two Bridges
Woodlawn Experimental Schools Project
Dayton Community School Councils

GOVERNMENT INITIATED

Five of the projects described in this chapter were clearly the result of action or initiative taken within the government. The four Follow Through Parent Implemented Programs are projects that are limited to the lower grades (through the 3rd) within public elementary schools. Not only are they sub-systems within systems, but they are also sub-schools within schools. Although government level initiative played a key role in a few of the districts included in the above list, only one district was first initiated at the government level:

Sub-schools (All are Follow Through projects)

East St. Louis, Illinois
Pulaski County, Arkansas
Greeley, Colorado
Flint, Michigan

District

Anacostia Community Schools Project

THE STRATEGIES

Although it is difficult to limit a number of the projects in this chapter to a single group since most utilized more than one strategy, they are grouped according to the type of strategy most important to their development. Within each grouping, projects are grouped according to the year in which activity began:

Direct Pressure

Intermediate School 201 (1966)[1]
Sayre Junior High School (1966)
Ocean Hill-Brownsville (1967)

[1] Although the I.S. 201 Complex was not formally established until 1967, the core of leadership for the project was active as a cohesive group beginning in 1966.

Utilizing Broad Federal and State Programs
The Rough Rock Demonstration School (1966)
The Two Bridges Demonstration District (1967)
The Springfield Avenue Community School (1968)
Dayton Community School Councils (1969)

Enlisting under University Auspices
The Morgan Community School (1967)
The Woodlawn Experimental Schools Project (1968)

Accent Innovation
Committee for Community Education Development (1968)

Finding New Resources
The Eastern High School Freedom School (1968)

Working from Within the System
Anacostia Community Schools Project (1968)
Follow-Through Parent-Implemented Projects
East St. Louis, Illinois (1968)
Pulaski County, Arkansas (1968)
Greeley, Colorado (1968)
Flint, Michigan (1969)

I.S. 201

Now facing the possibility of legal extinction, the I.S. 201 Complex in East Harlem was born outside the schools in the community and now may return totally to that community base. Undaunted by the state-imposed "decentralization" bill which failed to maintain the Complex in any form, David Spencer recalls the strength of the East Harlem activists who pooled their money to maintain a storefront office and freely volunteered many hours for the struggle with the New York City Board of Education. Spencer, the firm, tireless and charismatic chairman of the I.S. 201 Board, believes that the first grant from the Ford Foundation may have been more damaging than helpful. "Prosperity" diminished some of the volunteer energy important to the struggle.[1]

HISTORY: INTEGRATION AND COMMUNITY CONTROL

As the first major sustained confrontation with a city board of education over community control, the pioneering I.S. 201 struggle reveals the irony of the beginnings of the community controlled schools movement. The movement, so often attacked as a step back—toward segregation, began as a demand for integration. As drafted in the early 1960's, the drawing board plans for a new middle school in East Harlem promised that it would be an integrated school attracting white students from areas of Bronx and Queens. As the school neared completion in the Spring of 1966, it became obvious to concerned community residents that the promised integration would not occur. Most white parents wouldn't send their children to the ghetto of East Harlem —no matter how good the school.[2] Pressed by irate community residents, the city Board

[1] Interview with David Spencer, 103 E. 125th St., N.Y.C., January 23, 1970, 5 P.M.
[2] The Board of Education sent 10,000 letters to white parents to recruit students. Only ten agreed to enroll their children.

14

of Education finally promised that the school would be "integrated": 50 percent Puerto Rican and 50 percent black. Dismissing this as a bad joke, community residents began to shift their demands and new people came into leadership among community activists. Spencer, formerly an elevator operator who was encouraged by his wife to get out and do something about the horrible schools, joined with a skilled poverty program activist, Babette Edwards, and a militant white minister, Bob Nichols, to form the core of leadership. Recognizing the futility of working for integration at I.S. 201 and influenced by the promise of self-respect through Black Power, some community residents asserted that a segregated school located in their neighborhood must be planned and controlled by their community. They pointed to the double standard which allowed white teachers, administrators, repair and maintenance staff to earn wages by operating East Harlem's ineffective schools while enrolling their own children in distant suburban or Queens schools.

Curriculum, personnel policies and appointments, construction contracts and textbook lists were all determined by a white-dominated bureaucracy that rarely entered the Harlem community. In 1966, there were only two black principals in the 900 New York City public schools. Less than ten percent of the city teachers were black or Puerto Rican; more than fifty percent of the students were black or Puerto Rican. Despite the "careful" screening by the narrowly conceived testing of the New York City Board of Examiners for "competent" (predominantly white) staff, more than eighty percent of Harlem children were not completing high school and reading scores were years below the norm.

Even when the main thrust of the community group at I.S. 201 was for integration, many parents and residents saw this as the best strategy to gain *power*. They reasoned that the addition of white students to the local school would bring the power and connections of their white parents who in turn would demand and obtain a high quality school with skilled, experienced teachers. In addition to acknowledging the futility of further attempts for an integrated student body, the I.S. 201 community group began to doubt whether any group of parents can significantly influence a massive bureaucracy that controls the education of over one million children.

Contrary to popular belief, the new strategy of gaining some independence and control in their own school does not mean the I.S. 201 community had embraced a segregationist attitude. The leadership has frequently made it clear that they would welcome white students to their schools as long as majority control remained in the immediate community's hands. After all their struggles to obtain some power, they didn't want to turn control back to the whites whom they don't trust to maintain their interests.

STRATEGY: COMMUNITY PRESSURE

The history of the I.S. 201 Complex is filled with picketing, boycotts, mass meetings, sit-ins, and parent delegations "visiting" the central bureaucracy. Having forced the postponement of the opening of I.S. 201 from the Spring of 1966, the activists mounted a boycott the following September. After almost two weeks of picketing and pressure, Superintendent of Schools Donovan agreed to replace the white principal with a black principal approved by the community. This agreement lasted only a few hours: the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and Council of Supervisory Associations (CSA, representing principals and other school administrators) threatened action if the principal were removed.

Although the community activists finally dropped the boycott, they continually pressured the principal to follow their priorities. The constant pressure forced his resignation by the Spring of 1967. A black assistant principal served a few months as acting principal and then left due to similar pressure. She had been appointed by the Board without any community involvement in the decision.

Meanwhile the city-wide Board of Education was feeling the rising pressures for community control. As Mayor Lindsay appointed new members who were more responsive to community demands, the Board agreed to create three demonstration districts with a limited amount of autonomy. The Ford Foundation gave planning grants of between 40,000 and 51,000 dollars to each of the three districts: the I.S. 201 Complex, Ocean Hill-Brownsville and Two Bridges. (Actually the grants were made to two incorporated community groups and a church as "conduits" for the newly formed districts.) The need to include the feeder elementary schools in a separate district along with Intermediate School 201 had been quickly recognized by activists. As they struggled to improve the quality of education at I.S. 201, the poor preparation students were getting in the four elementary schools which sent children to 201 became evident.

GOVERNING BOARD AND POWER

The I.S. 201 Demonstration District was created in the Fall of 1967 to be "governed" by a Board of 21: ten parents, two elected by the parents of each of the five schools; five teachers elected by the teachers in each school; five community residents selected by the parents; and one principal elected by the five principals. However, no clear delegation of powers was made by the central Board to this community Governing Board. Community people wanted more control than the central Board was willing to agree to.

Most major decisions were subject to possible opposition by the appointed Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools, the educational bureaucracy, the teachers' union (UFT) and the supervisor's association (CSA). Despite this powerful array of potential obstacles, Spencer is pleased with the extent of local control 201 has exercised in:

a) Naming principals and other administrators,
b) Appointing teachers,
c) Developing and implementing new curriculum,
d) Compiling new lists of books to purchase,
e) Hiring of custodians and their staffs.[8]

Powers which completely remain with the central Board include contracting for construction, major repairs, and food services. All are areas which could bring additional profits and wages to local community residents rather than large city-wide contractors (who usually must hire their workers from union lists which often exclude minority group workers).

Maintenance of the powers "gained" often has required continued pressures. The recent appointment of a new I.S. 201 district administrator was delayed for two months because a regulation was interpreted by the Board of Education to mean he was ineligible to serve. After much argument, the Board reversed its position and confirmed the appointment.

[8] Interview with David Spencer, 103 E. 125th St., N.Y.C., January 23, 1970, 5 P.M.

The Complex's schools all remained open and operated fully during the 1967 teachers' strike for a new city-wide contract and the 1968 strike concerning Ocean Hill-Brownsville (see section on Ocean Hill below). Most union teachers had either developed stronger loyalties to the District Governing Board or had left the Complex. Since most of the schools in the District had operated normally during the 1968 strike, the Board decided that they would not open their schools on the days added by the central Board in the agreement it had to sign with the union to end the strike. This was a small way in which the Governing Board could demonstrate its support for Ocean Hill. When ten union teachers in one of the District's elementary schools (P.S. 39) attempted to open the school on the Friday after Thanksgiving in accordance with the Union agreement, the community Governing Board dismissed the teachers on charges of insubordination against the District policy. This action was reversed by the central Board which returned the teachers to P.S. 39 under police guard; a total boycott of P.S. 39 was organized by the community. After a long period of struggle all ten teachers chose to leave the school. The Governing Board strongly asserted its right to demand teacher accountability to the Board as elected representatives of the parents.

CURRICULUM AND THE FUTURE

New curriculum programs have primarily been initiated by the Governing Board and some administrative staff. Chairman Spencer speaks strongly of his focus on a "humanistic" curriculum. He is proud of the elementary level program developed by the Governing Board in cooperation with Dr. Caleb Gattegno of Schools for the Future. Three full time consultants help the teachers of P.S. 133 to utilize Words in Color for the teaching of reading and Gattegno's method with cuisenaire rods in math classes. A central goal in this school has become the "subordination of teaching to learning." One of the elementary schools has a Follow-Through program chosen by the Board. Some teachers in P.S. 68 have developed their own vertical program involving one class on each grade level. Formerly a choatic school, P.S. 68 has now become a positive orderly setting for this group of young teachers to develop freer, more individualized classrooms which borrow from the Leicestershire model. Other teacher-initiated changes have not always been encouraged by principals or the District—perhaps a reflection of earlier struggles with the teachers union. The Governing Board has stressed teacher training efforts which focus on attitudes. Much of this involves putting teachers in communication with articulate community residents who inform teachers about the community, its needs and desires.

Although many observers feel that the time and effort consumed by the many struggles with the educational establishment sapped much energy that could have been directed toward developing better education, David Spencer points to the important role that the struggles have had in strengthening the community's resolve.

Having devoted an unusually large amount of time to thorough discussion of issues in regular meetings and weekend retreats, the Governing Board works very effectively as a cohesive unit. Outsiders working with the Board have noted its growing eagerness for help and advice as Board Members have persistently sought strategies to improve curriculum and the schools for their children. Still not satisfied with the present state of the District schools, Spencer and other members have not adopted the alibis or defensive statements common to many struggling inner-city educators.

Spencer is confident that the District can now make great strides in bringing quality education to East Harlem if it can gain the time necessary to do it.[4]

SAYRE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AD HOC COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

Many schools across the country have developed ad hoc community pressure groups which often exert considerable amounts of control over policy in an individual school. Sometimes local parents are activated through the organizing efforts of broader-based school critics such as the United Bronx Parents in New York City. More often parents in a single school quietly force changes. Frequently the response of the local and city-wide school administrators determines whether initial parent demands will grow to a confrontation, or continue as a semi-permanent pressure group providing educators with information and demands regarding community needs. The Philadelphia Superintendent of Schools appears to have decided that working with the Sayre Committee has lasting value.

YEARS OF PRESSURE

In 1965 an ad hoc committee of parents and citizens was formed in response to a controversy at Sayre Junior High School. Parents of children attending Sayre were notified that because of the need to accommodate about 700 additional pupils, a "dual school" would be established. The notice of this plan sent home one day with the children immediately aroused concern among a number of parents who phoned others that evening. United in opposition at a public meeting called by the district school superintendent, the group forced a retraction of the plan for a "dual school." Instead most of the additional children were not transferred to Sayre and two special programs were added to relieve crowding already existent in the school. One of these programs involves utilization of two other buildings in which seventh graders are given remediation work in math and reading. A program in career development for all eighth graders activates a space in the basement formerly not used for classes.

The area around Sayre is predominantly middle income and working class black. Fewer than ten percent of the families are on welfare. Home ownership is high compared to most other black areas of Philadelphia. Five West Philadelphia elementary schools send about 1800 students on to Sayre. Sayre graduates attend a variety of high schools. According to the principal and some parents, "almost no students drop out" while attending Sayre.

AD HOC COMMITTEE

The Community Committee at Sayre has remained a self-defined group of parents and community activists throughout the four years. There has never been an election and there are no plans to hold one. Though it has no elected chairman, the Committee seems to look for leadership to Mrs. Novella Williams, President of Citizens for Progress and known to many community control activists. Two of the most active parents on the committee, Mrs. Schoapz and Mrs. Hopewell, work full-time as home-school liaison aides at the school. They are a direct source of information for the Com-

[4] Note: It appears that future efforts will have to be made without official recognition of the community Governing Board by city or state school officials. As of June 30, 1970, the State Legislature's action to discontinue the 201 District became effective.

mittee about current events at the school. Two local ministers have also exerted much influence on the Committee. No formal memberships exist on the committee which varies widely in size according to the crisis or calm of the school.

In addition to the successful battle of four years ago, the committee takes major credit for "retiring" the white principal after much pressure during the 1967-68 school year. The new principal, a Negro, was interviewed and approved by the Committee before his appointment. Philadelphia doesn't have a rigidly determined eligibility list for principals on which the top person must be given first choice. Instead a qualified person may be selected from a large group of candidates.

Although the Committee has no formal written powers, its access to the office of the Superintendent of Schools seems sufficient to maintain a kind of *de facto* control —control to the extent that community activists are content, even pleased, with what is happening at Sayre. They see it as *their* school, *their* principal, *their* remediation program and *their* career development laboratory.

QUIET, STEADY CHANGE

Committee members repeatedly stressed an "orderly" transition to community control. Some members clearly stressed *control* as the goal of their work; others seemed to be working toward a larger degree of community *involvement*. All try to avoid the open confrontations with teachers common to Ocean Hill and I.S. 201. Given the present sympathies of the School Superintendent, the Committee appears confident that they can proceed in an orderly way toward fulfillment of their varied goals. Some school officials clearly feel that their cooperation with the Committee must be continued if another crisis is to be avoided. They are sure that sizeable support would be given the Committee if an open confrontation occurred.

The Home and School Association (HSA) at Sayre, Philadelphia's parallel to PTAs and PAs, is not seen as an opposition group to the activist Committee—as has occurred in some New York City schools with more militant groups. Instead, there is considerable overlapping membership and communication between the Committee and HSA. Because officers of the Home and School Association are the elected representatives of the parents, the Committee has had a reason to avoid its own elections which could put it in competition with an ally.

Sayre has been trying to involve more parents in its programs by hiring the two home-school workers. However with a ratio of one worker to almost one thousand families, the amount of progress is limited. Just as important a role for the two workers occurs in their pressuring the principal for a parent lounge and other improvements and informing the Committee of what's happening at Sayre.

Though the workers greet parents visiting the school and undoubtedly make them feel more comfortable, not many parents come to school to observe or participate in classes. The principal explained that most parents work. This creates a problem for a parent volunteer program which Sayre is trying to develop.

An informal type of accountability present in many suburban district operates in Sayre. Although substandard teachers (as judged by principal and parents) are said to be still employed at Sayre, parents assert that by a slow process of pressure, unacceptable teachers are being transferred out of the school. The Committee prefers this progress to an open confrontation over general hiring and firing policies.

OCEAN HILL-BROWNSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Known widely for its role in the 1968 New York City teachers strike, Ocean Hill-Brownsville School District deserves to be known for its implementation of many innovative programs and involvement of community people in those programs. Although the replacement of older (generally members of the United Federation of Teachers) by younger, more open-minded teachers undoubtdly has eased the introduction of the new programs, the source of the new approaches is the elected Community Board and the staff which it has hired.

MANY NEW PROGRAMS AND EXPERIMENTATION

Central to most of the changes is much fuller utilization of community resources and people than in normal public schools. For example, intermediate school students tutor elementary students in Project Serve. Teams of four parent aides work with one licensed teacher in conducting two average-sized classes at one of the elementary schools. Allotted the usual complement of 75 aides for the eight Ocean Hill-Brownsville schools the District re-allocated and added other funds so that they employ 325 parent aides. Some community people maintain contact between parents and schools "around parent/child/school problems."

Many programs have been added with help of funds granted to the Community Education Center (CEC) which operates under the control of the Governing Board. Reverend John Powis, Ocean Hill Board member, points to attitudes at the Board of Education and civil service regulations as limitations on the present quality of these programs.[5] Parents of children with reading difficulties are shown in their homes by trained community workers how to help their children read. In each school a team of two community-chosen social workers and four community members help with "pressing school/child/parent problems which affect the learning of children." Adult education and day care facilities are provided. Trained teenagers are used to extend the day care services so that parents can attend meetings or classes. An Afro-American and an Hispano-American Studies Program have been developed for staff, parents, and students of Ocean Hill-Brownsville. A community newspaper has been published to spread news about education; young people are trained in photography in order to record community and school events. High school and college students under the supervision of teachers tutor intermediate school students. Potential dropouts are being contacted by young men from the community who attempt to help them stay in school. A center is being developed for unwed mothers. The center will provide care, allow teenagers to continue school and give the mother training in child care.

Additional programs include a Bereiter-Engelmann approach to early elementary school learning conducted under a Follow-Through grant. Extensive preschool programs include a Montessori approach for four year olds. The elementary school with the greatest percentage of Spanish-speaking students has a bi-lingual program in which students are taught to read in Spanish first, then in English. Project Read utilizes the Sullivan Series in teaching reading through programmed instruction; Project Saturation and Project Learn stress individualized learning. Cuisenaire rods are used to teach algebra before arithmetic in some elementary schools. Teachers are also being introduced to new experience-centered math methods, through intensive training.[6]

---

[5] Comment in letter to author from Reverend John Powis, Ocean Hill-Brownsville Governing Board member, May, 1970.

[6] A more complete listing and description of special programs is given in the 1969 *Directory of Ocean Hill-Brownsville School District*, 249 Hopkinson Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. 11233. See also "Educational Happenings in Ocean Hill-Brownsville in *News from Ocean Hill-Brownsville*, March, 1969, pp. 4-5, 8.

Although it is too early to read much significance into improved achievement test scores, the District reports other changes which reflect a changing community and school morale and attitude. Vandalism has decreased markedly. Student suspensions are reported to be down to less than 30 in the 1968-69 school year from 628 prior to the formation of the District. Student and teacher attendance has improved. Teacher turnover has been reduced considerably after the early controversy with UFT teachers.[7]

STAFF

As a result of this early staff turnover, most of the teachers presently employed are young. Often attracted to Ocean Hill by the District's commitment to community involvement and innovation, the staff is usually enthusiastic about the new programs. Ocean Hill has also pioneered in the selection of its principals (six of the eight District schools lacked principals when the Community Board took over). The Board named the first Chinese and Puerto Rican principals in the City; they appointed the first black secondary principal in New York City. Although attacked as anti-white and anti-Semitic during the struggle over teacher transfers, Ocean Hiil-Brownsville hired predominantly white, Jewish teachers to replace those who left the District. "The teaching staff continues to be almost 80 percent white with close to 85 percent of them of Jewish ancestry." [8]

As in most areas of New York City, this staff composition contrasts sharply with the breakdown of student population. District population was 73 percent black, 24 percent Puerto Rican and 2.9 percent "other" according to the 1960 census. More than thirty percent of the community people receive welfare grants; the 1960 U. S. Census reports the medium family income ranging from 3000 to 5100 dollars.[9] Student achievement in reading averaged more than two years below city grade level before the project began in 1967.[10]

HISTORY

Concerned with these conditions and critical of some teachers and a principal (who was said to be an alcoholic), parents and residents interested in improving the Ocean Hill-Brownsville schools found that due to their minority status in a very large local school district (District #17) they were not even able to gain representation on the local school board (which had minimal powers anyway). Late in 1966, activists in the community established their own iindependent local school board. A plan to participate in the planning of a new intermediate school being constructed in the area apparently received no response from the Superintendent. A later plan for an experimental school district grew out of this group encouraged by prospects of a Ford Foundation planning grant and with ideas borrowed from the group of parents working for a district around I.S. 201 in Harlem. The planning group consisting of parents, a Brooklyn College professor and representatives of the UFT, completed a proposal for the eight school District in July, 1967.

The Ford Foundation grant of 44,000 dollars allowed the planning group to proceed immediately with formal elections for the seven parent representatives. Unfortunately, the Board of Education at first refused to provide lists of parents with children enrolled in the schools. A door-to-door effort augmented by public announcements

[7] See statistics in Mario D. Fantini, "Participation, Decentralization, Community Control and Quality Education" in *Teachers College Record*, 71:1, Sept. 1969, pp. 106-107.
[8] Rhody A. McCoy, "Ocean Hill Struggles for Identity," *New York Times*, Jan. 12, 1970.
[9] Carol A. Wielk, "The Ocean Hill-Brownsville School Project: A Profile," *Community Issues*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Queens College Institute for Community Studies, Feb. 1969, p. 4.
[10] *Ibid.*

produced a turnout of 1050 of 4200 eligible parents for the August 3-4, 1967, election. Teachers elected by each school staff in the Spring for the planning board continued as Governing Board representatives in the Fall. The Union sent one additional representative. The seven parents selected five community representatives from among ten nominated by community organizations.

Subsequent criticism of the election procedure for parent representatives was accentuated when the UFT was looking for issues during the long 1968 strike. The election was organized in less than a month and apparently no large "meet the candidate" meetings were held. The lack of cooperation from the Board of Education in securing lists of parents raised further obstacles. However, when compared to other board elections and Ocean Hill-Brownsville local, state and federal voting, the 25 percent turnout was quite good. (For example, the March 1970 elections for regular local school board in the reconstituted 22-school district which includes the seven Ocean Hill schools produced only 883 votes.) Each of the seven elected parents was well known to the active parents through the parent association in their respective schools. Four Board members were or had been presidents of their parent associations; the other three were also active in their school associations. This link back to parents in each of the schools has helped gain parent acceptance of the many experimental programs undertaken by the Governing Board.

TWO UFT STRIKES

Although nine teacher representatives joined in the original planning sessions during the summer of 1967, they later criticized these meetings as being "extremely hostile and negative". They reacted defensively to community criticisms directed at some "bigoted, incompetent and obstructive teachers who were attempting to sabotage the project."[11] The city-wide UFT strike in the fall of 1967 increased the split with the community. Reacting especially to the Union's demand for greater control over suspension of "disruptive" children, the Governing Board voted to defy the strike and keep the District schools open. They felt that suspensions are often a means used by teachers to rid their classrooms of students who are unmanageable only because of the teacher's own shortcomings and lack of understanding. (Note that this feeling is reflected in Ocean Hill's very low student suspension rate since it became a Demonstration District.) Soon after the 1967 strike, the teacher representatives to the Governing Board refused to vote on selection of new principals. Qualified under state law but not certified under New York City examination procedures, the principals were appointed under a special provision allowing the waiving of local regulations for principals of demonstration schools. This allowed the District to appoint principals whose ethnic and racial origin more truly reflected the composition of the student bodies of the schools. These appointments later became one of the many issues in the 1968 strike. The UFT and supervisors association challenged the legality of the appointments.

A disagreement over other powers of the Governing Board precipitated the city-wide strike in the fall of 1968. In general, the Governing Board contended that it had the right to transfer teachers whom they judged to be unsuited for their schools; the UFT contended that the District did not have this power and that "due process" would have to be followed in "dismissing" any teachers. (The Governing Board maintained it was transferring, not dismissing or firing, the teachers.) Whether or not Ocean Hill-Brownsville actually *had* the power to act in this situation is probably

[11] Wielk, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

much less important than the question of whether they *should* have this power. It raises the question of teacher accountability which is so central to community control.

The detailed events and issues in the strike are too complicated to analyze here. Numerous books and articles have been written on this subject.[22] Some feel that the strike never would have occurred if the state legislature hadn't been simultaneously considering a proposal for city-wide decentralization (or community control). Whether intended or not, the UFT five week strike served to warn those in the state legislature that they should proceed cautiously and be cognizant of the Union's strength.

STRATEGY AND THE FUTURE

The Governing Board had utilized a strategy similar to that of I.S. 201. They acted in a number of cases to make what they felt were necessary improvements in their District even if their authority was not clear. This served to test the limits of a "community" district which had been left vaguely defined by the Superintendent of Schools. The Governing Board backed its actions by direct action: marches, sit-ins and boycotts supported by Ocean Hill-Brownsville residents.

As the three year "experiment" comes to a close in 1970, the District is anxious to be judged on its record of innovation and educational improvement. Rhody McCoy, the District Administrator, has repeatedly called for an impartial evaluation of progress made. Unfortunately, the political steps taken by the state legislature to abolish the district is likely to be the only evaluation made.[23]

ROUGH ROCK DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL
CHINLE, ARIZONA

Unlike any other schools considered in this chapter, Rough Rock School is a sub-system within a federal (instead of state) system of schools. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA, a part of the Interior Department) runs schools on Indian reservations across the United States. Except for some social forces that have been affecting our country in the last five years and a series of events on the Navajo Reservation, the Rough Rock School would be another one of the regular BIA schools. Instead Rough Rock is now so independent of the BIA that it should almost be classified under the independent schools in a later chapter. It's included here because its base of funds is public, provided in a block grant from the BIA.

HISTORY: FIRST DEMONSTRATION ABANDONED

Early in the nineteen-sixties, Alan Yazzie, Chairman of the Navajo Tribal Education Committee, discussed with other members of the Navajo Tribal Council the need for vast improvements in Navajo education. The areas of concern included, 1) meaningful local school boards, 2) cultural identification, 3) community education and

[22] The following books and articles with varied viewpoints are recommended:
Berube, Maurice R. and Marilyn Gittel (editors), *Confrontation at Ocean Hill-Brownsville*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969.
Epstein, Jason, "The New York City School Revolt," *New York Review of Books*, October 10, 1968, pp. 37-41.
Harrington, Michael, "The Freedom to Teach: Beyond the Panaceas," *Village Voice* (October 3, 1968).
Karp, Richard, "School Decentralization in New York: A Case Study," *Interplay Magazine*, August-September 1969, pp. 9-14.
Mayer, Martin, *The Teachers Strike: New York, 1968*, New York: Harper and Row, 1969.
Shanker, Albert, "The Real Meaning of the New York City Teachers' Strike," *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 2, No. 8 (April, 1969), pp. 434-41.
Stern, Sol, "Scab Teachers," *Ramparts* (November 17, 1968), pp. 17-24.
Wasserman, Miriam, *The School Fix, NYC, USA*, New York: Outerbridge and Dienstfrey, 1970, pp. 185-386.

[23] Ocean Hill's Board joined that of the I.S. 201 District in a suit to continue the experiments. However, the Districts were formally abolished at the end of June, 1970.

development, 4) native language learning, 5) home visits, and 6) guidance and counseling. Mr. Yazzie recruited Robert Roessel, then Director of Indian Education at Arizona State University and a talented administrator, to help him work on the idea of a demonstration school which would attack the problems and concerns that they had outlined. The team then drew up a research proposal, gained OEO support in 1964, and gained the agreement of the Bureau of Indian Affairs that a BIA school at Lukachukai would become the demonstration center.

However, Lukachukai already was an ongoing school program and had its normal contingent of BIA administrators and teachers. The OEO financed administrators and faculty were added to this staff. Civil Service regulations prevented a local board of Navajos from doing any significant hiring and firing. The school with its two groups of administrators became something of a two-headed monster. However, it was encouraging enough to warrant a new attempt.

CONTROL AT ROUGH ROCK

A new school already being built by the BIA in 1966 at Rough Rock was proposed as the new site for a demonstration. It would begin without the problems of Civil Service and an already existent administration. A group of Navajos formed a group called Demonstration in Navajo Education (DINE, Inc.) to accept the funds and coordinate the first efforts for Rough Rock. Committed to the idea of community control, DINE first set up a series of meetings in the Rough Rock area in order to propose the community school to the community.

Set in the wide spaces of Northeastern Arizona, the Rough Rock School was to serve many square miles inhabited by Navajo sheep herders. There are few clusters of houses let alone villages in this remote area. The nearest paved road is 17 miles distant from the school.

The community residents endorsed the idea of a locally controlled school. A five member School Board was elected for planning in 1966. Later it was expanded to seven members to gain greater representation from some more of the Navajo tribal chapters served by the school.

A seven member Board is elected for three year terms. Most of the members are older, highly respected men in the tribe. The combined formal education among these seven Board members is less than 10 years. The Board meets weekly in extended, exploratory, meetings. Each member gives his impressions of proposals to come before Board. The atmosphere is very positive and reflective. It provides a sharp contrast with the rapid paced, often combative sessions of many community boards.

Monthly community-parent meetings are well attended. A majority of the parents come for the big yearly meetings and elections. The Board also meets regularly with DINE and the tribal chapters to coordinate community projects.

PARTICIPATION-INVOLVEMENT

It's almost a tradition that three kinds of schools operate on the Navajo Reservation: 1) Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools, 2) Public Schools, 3) Mission Schools. Navajos call BIA schools, Wa'a'shindoon bi'olt'a or Washington schools. They call public schools 'Bilaga'ana bi'olt'a, or white man's school and mission schools, 'Eneishodi bi'olt'a or the school of 'those who drag their clothes', a name stemming from the first Catholic priest who came to the reservation.

> A fourth kind of school has now appeared. It's a tribal school controlled and operated by the local Navajo community at Rough Rock, Arizona. Its English name is Rough Rock Demonstration School. Navajos call it 'Dine bi'olt'a' or the Navajo's School. These words express more eloquently than anything the significance and sense of identification the Navajos attach to the Rough Rock Demonstration School.[14]

This sense of community and identification is accomplished despite the fact that the School services many square miles across an area with high mesas and no paved roads, with dust and/or mud which interferes with most means of transportation.

Teachers regularly visit the homes or "hogans" of the Navajo parents. In some cases they spend two or three days living in the home while a substitute covers their class. They may help with the herding of the sheep, with the housework, crafts and so forth, that are conducted as a regular part of Navajo life. The parents also come to the School as guests and are provided with food and dorm space. One of the classrooms is turned over to a crafts room exclusively for parents. Mothers weave rugs; fathers and grandparents make tools and jewelry. More women have set up looms in back of regular classrooms. As you walk down the halls of the Rough Rock School you find many parents sitting in their traditional dress along the halls. They feel comfortable in the School.

Parents come to the health center, founded by HEW as a part of the School effort. It has a strong advisory community committee to make it responsive to local needs. Parents are also hired on a rotating, eight week basis to help in the dormitory living. Many of the children must live at the School full time because of the distances involved in reaching their homes. Parents come in to tell stories and tell about Navajo traditions, legends and history.

As much as possible, children are encouraged to visit their parents. One of the large problems of Indian schools has been separation of children from their parents. Rough Rock has attempted to bus more and more children despite the poor roads. It encourages resident children to visit their parents whenever possible.

A section of the School staff is devoted to community development. Instead of following the normal procedure of contracting out for laundry services, the School has set up its own laundry, again employing parents on a rotating basis so that they may may share the income of $5,000 a year that ordinarily would be sent to some laundry service off the reservation. At one point baby chicks were brought in so that local people could raise chickens and hatch the eggs for the School. In the first year of the School operation, 40 Navajos were hired who had never before held a permanent job. Community development also has purchased hay and then resold it to the Navajos of the area at cost. It has been been estimated that 60 to 70% of the adult community received some direct benefits of the School.

CLASSROOM AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Walking into the Rough Rock School one sees the presence of Navajo culture on bulletin boards, in materials, and in books throughout the classroom. A program has been started in the primary grades to teach children to read in the Navajo language first. Later, after having learned to read Navajo, they are taught to read English. Oral classroom work is conducted in both Navajo and in English from the first grade on.

[14] "Rough Rock Demonstration School", a pamphlet published by the school, January, 1968.

Since the Navajo language was unwritten until recently, they've had to develop new materials and texts in order to teach Navajo.

Rough Rock is not ignoring the "dominant culture" as they call the Anglo or American culture. It is taught with the hope that children will have the choice of participating in the mainstream of American society as much as they wish to. English is being taught with the TESL(Teaching English as a Second Language) approach and materials.

Special curriculum materials stressing native culture have also been developed for the intermediate grades. Folk stories dictated by old men of the tribe form a center of this. *Grandfather Stories of the Navajos, Coyote Stories* and others have been published. The School is building up a unique library of Navajo literature.

Atmosphere in the classrooms is not exceptionally free but certainly freer than most Bureau of Indian Affairs Schools. The School has attempted to diminish the importance of the strict grading system and has a modified vertical group system called the "continuous progress plan."

Adult education at Rough Rock is extensive, including practical subjects: driver education, consumer education, English, shop and first aid. Over 300 adults were enrolled in regularly scheduled classes in the first year of their program.

STAFF AND FUNDING

In 1968, Dillon Platero, a Navajo, was named Director of the School replacing Robert Roessel, who helped to establish the School. Rough Rock has had an increasing number of Navajo teachers recently. This staff change is vital to teaching the Navajo language and culture in the early grades. The School has attracted a tremendous number of applicants for the 25 to 30 staff positions. This has occurred despite the fact that the School and the Board demand strict accountability and see the staff as a servant of the Board. The staff may advocate a new idea but then they must serve according to the decision of the Board and Director.

The varied sources and flexibility of the funding for Rough Rock are a testimony to the skills of the Director Dillon Platero and his predecessor, Robert Roessel. (Roessel is now developing and directing the Navajo Community College near Rough Rock so that educational opportunities up through higher education will be available to local Navajos.) The Bureau of Indian Affairs has agreed that it will provide, from 1969 to 1974, yearly block grants comparable to what Rough Rock would be utilizing if it were a BIA controlled school. The local School Board will continue to be free to plan, set priorities and determine the School budget. OEO originally supported the School with a demonstration grant which is slowly being phased out. Follow-Through provides $750 per child up through third grade. The Donner Foundation has been a supporter.

Presently the School is making efforts to get more Title I money. Title I has previously been restricted to "local education agencies" as defined in the original Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Recognizing the importance of political support, Rough Rock has gained the help of Arizona's two senators, Goldwater and Fannin, who are sponsoring a change in the Title I legislation to include Rough Rock. They've also attracted the attention of national politicians. Senator Edward Kennedy visited the school and then praised it at hearings on Indian education.

SUPPORT AND THE FUTURE

The school is politically popular in many circles. It has also created enemies. Some of them are within the BIA. The school leadership is aware that a good public image attracts support. Many articles have been published about Rough Rock.[15]

Concerned about other Navajos and American Indians, Rough Rock has encouraged ferment and helped to prepare Indians from other other schools to control their own schools. They've worked through Title I Advisory Boards and the "Boards of Educations" of BIA schools, which presently function without decision-making power. In the spring of 1969, Rough Rock brought together a conference of 300 Navajos to discuss plans for other locally controlled schools. The school and the Navajo people are now negotiating for more BIA schools to be turned over to local control. A high school in Ramah, New Mexico, has already been approved for BIA funding under a plan similar to the Rough Rock model.

NEWARK:
THE SPRINGFIELD AVENUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The Newark Day Care Council working in a leadership role with a coalition of other public agencies in Newark has created an exciting day care and primary school in the heart of Newark's black ghetto.

The Council consists of representatives from most of the community organizations serving inner-city, black neighborhoods in Newark, New Jersey. Created by community people as a response to the urgent community needs for re-structuring early childhood education and services to working parents, the Day Care Council was committed to provide the best possible day care and education facilities for children of mothers now or formerly enrolled in CEP job training programs, and to develop new community aspirations.

STRATEGY: MULTIPLE FUNDING SOURCES

Faced with much skepticism in Newark at first, the Council initially gained commitment of some funds from the Labor Department. They also convinced the New Jersey State Department of Educational Research and New Jersey State Department of Community Services to provide funds for innovative educational programs for the primary grades. Funds and support of the Newark Board of Education were somewhat more reluctantly provided. (The School is a neighborhood school serving public primary grade children in the area.) Day Care Council President Edna Thomas indicates that by early 1970, the Board of Education had become a full convert to the idea and is providing all cooperation requested by the school and parents.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

The community-based Day Care Council acts as a strong advocate of the parents' interest with the State Department of Educational Research and Newark School System which jointly run the School with the Council. At the Council's insistence, parents helped to interview and select the teachers for each classroom. The composition of

[15] "What Rough Rock Demonstrates" by Donald A. Erickson and Henrietta Schwartz (*Integrated Education*, March-April, 1970, Issue 44, pp. 21-34) is quite critical of Rough Rock's publicity as well as many aspects of their program. Based on an OEO sponsored study ("Community School at Rough Rock") conducted in 1968 and early 1969, the article is attacked as outdated and its conclusions are countered in a 41 page letter and attachments sent to Senator Goldwater by Rough Rock's Director on April 6, 1970.

this seven member selection committee suggests the division of powers: four parents, three educators. Two of the parents were elected by the parent body and two were appointed by the Council; one of the educators represented the State Department of Educational Research and two were from the Newark School System.

Two community residents, Mary Willis (Director of the Day Care Council) and Edna Thomas, have exerted great energy and initiative in setting directions of the School. Both advocate an evolution toward greater parent control. They feel that as parents "sharpen their skills in dealing with educational problems" through active involvement, the parents will want and demand even better community services.

A COMPREHENSIVE MODEL

The Springfield Avenue Community School opened in January 1969, in a two-story furniture store located on the main street of the 1967 Newark riots. Beautifully designed by a black architect bought from the Boston, the spacious building provides flexible areas for the School's 350 children. Small classes emphasize an individualized approach to the young children, age 2 to 8. The School is justly proud of the services it provides. The day care facilities are available from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. every work day of the year, a nurse and part-time doctor assist in the medical program, and there are extensive facilities for serving up to three meals a day plus snacks.

The curriculum was developed by a community design team headed by Dr. Hortense Jones. It stresses the development of concepts through utilization of the child's own life-style experiences. The Day Care Council points to the involvement of parents in the planning of the curriculum for each classroom. Since parents met with individual classroom teachers to help design the program, each classroom varies in emphasis. Parents and teachers continue to meet regularly to discuss classroom progress and set future directions.

Day Care Council people see the Springfield Avenue Community School as a pioneering effort which opens a path for similar schools. Already they are setting plans for another school to be located in a low income housing project.

THE TWO BRIDGES MODEL SCHOOL DISTRICT

One of the three demonstration districts funded by Ford Foundation to develop a plan for community control, the Two Bridges District was selected in part for reasons opposite to the selection of I.S. 201 and Ocean Hill-Brownsville. This racially and ethnically mixed area of the Lower East Side of Manhattan had no history of major confrontations over schools; it includes a sizeable middle class minority living in cooperative apartments. The school enrollment includes 40 percent Chinese, 35 percent Puerto Rican, 13 percent white and 12 percent black. But even the sizeable Chinese group is clearly split between recent immigrants and long term residents of Chinatown (a part of Two Bridges): "They (the recent immigrants) have little in common with the older, established Chinese population in Chinatown who have experienced considerable economic mobility. The recent arrivals, because of their uncertain status and difficulty in communicating, work for low wages in factories. . . ." [28] Meetings involving just the major segments of the school population must be conducted in three languages. Effective community workers must be bi-lingual, or preferably, tri-lingual.

[28] Adele Spier, "Two Bridges Model School District" A Profile," Vol. 1, No. 3, *Community Issues*, Institute for Community Studies, Queens College, Feb. 1969, p. 11.

028

BACKGROUND: A NON-COMMUNITY

Contrary to the expectations of Ford, this diversity became the source of many cleavages rather than a contribution of varied resources and strengths. Although the Two Bridges Governing Board has initiated some changes in the five District schools, it is clear that much energy has been consumed in attempting to carve out a spirit for community control where, in fact, no natural community yet existed. As in the case of colonial powers drawing national lines for African countries such as Nigeria and the Congo, the selection of Two Bridges area was made by an external power. The Ford Foundation responded in 1967 with the Demonstration District idea to a simple grant request by an ad hoc committee from Two Bridges Neighborhood Council, a church, and the activist Parent Develop Program (PDP—an arm of the Poverty Program in Two Bridges). PDP had already encountered much resistance to change among other residents and teachers in Two Bridges. True school confrontation had not occurred, but not because the area didn't have miserable school conditions and disaffected parents. Residents didn't have enough feeling of community to unite and confront those in control of the schools.

The ad hoc committee proceeded to write a proposal for a district, "The Quest for a Child Centered School." A Planning Council (PC) composed of PDP parents, teacher and parent association representatives met during the summer. These three distinct interest groups split further during this effort to work out the details for the model district. Planning Council Chairman, Joe Laspro, a teacher with a strong commitment to community control, explains that "these conflicting interests became obstacles to what should have been the main goal of the PC, that is, the development of a base of support in the community. Because the need for enlisting grassroots support became overshadowed by a power play between interest groups, the Parent Seminar never achieved its purpose. Parents never understood decentralization as involving them." [17] The payment of 300 dollars per month to parents compared to 1000 dollars per month to teachers for doing substantially the same work during the summer planning aggravated growing resentment by PDP parents on the PC.

BATTLEGROUND: UFT VERSUS THE BOARD

The UFT strike in the fall of 1967, and the union's demand for the right to suspend children whom they found to be disruptive created more antagonisms. Two of the five school teaching staffs decided, on urging of the UFT leadership, not to participate in the Governing Board elections. Sixty percent of the teachers voted, as did 85 percent of the supervisors and 25 percent of the parents.[18] The elected Board consisted of five parents, three teachers, four "residents", one supervisor and one community representative. This included three Chinese, three blacks, three Puerto Ricans and five whites. An effort encouraged by the black members in the Spring of 1968 to join with Ocean Hill and I.S. 201 to gain greater authority for the Districts led to the resignation of all remaining staff representatives.

The fall 1968 UFT strike against Ocean Hill-Brownsville widened the already bitter splits in the community and among teachers. Although all five Two Bridges District schools were kept open during the strike, the Governing Board had to depend heavily on substitutes to replace the many regular teachers who were striking. Generally conservative Two Bridges parents were reluctant to have teachers' roles taken by

[17] Quoted in *op. cit.* p. 5.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

community people, a step taken by many parent groups in other parts of the strike-affected school system. Pleased by the commitment of some of the substitutes, the Board offered 23 of them permanent positions when the UFT strike stretched into a fourth week. When the Governing Board was refused permission to add the substitutes to their already full permanent staff, parents and residents were enlisted for a sit-in at the Board of Education. This single successful effort at direct action was not characteristic of the usually cautious or divided stance of the Governing Board.[19]

After the resignation of staff representatives from the Board in 1968, the remaining parent and community members altered the selection procedure for district superintendent. Instead of the "impartial" tests urged by staff, they decided to depend on direct personal interviews. More recently, a new principal for one of the elementary schools was selected at an open meeting with the parents who made the selection by secret ballot after the candidates spoke.

DEEP PROFESSIONAL OPPOSITION TO BOARD

An earlier principal had been selected by the Governing Board without any consultation with the appropriate parent association. The resultant uproar aided the UFT in its persistent efforts to gain parent support to oppose the Governing Board. In contrast to the effective organizing through some anti-community control parents associations of the UFT, the Governing Board gained little broad-based parent or community support. As a result, the dominant PDP element lost its majority to some UFT supported parents who captured five of the ten seats in the 1969 election.

The Governing Board generally suffered throughout its tenure from the divisions in the community which were clearly reflected in the composition of the Board. Perhaps even more it suffered from a lack of preparation or training. Although few local school board members in any district of the United States receive formal training they learn basic mechanics of school and Board operation and methods of dealing with educational issues from other board members who served on their board before them. (Most local school boards have three to eight year terms with service staggered so that half or more of the members remain on the board after each election.) Two Bridges Governing Board faced a job much more difficult than that of an established local school board: to set up a new district, develop a unified sense of community concern in an ethnically and economically diverse area, and fight many forces which felt there should not even be local control in Two Bridges.

In particular, professional educators were accustomed to a lot of independence in running the schools. Supervisors acknowledged the city-wide Board of Education as their boss; they gained their position through the Board of Examiners system. A community Governing Board juxtaposed between them and these accustomed superiors was hard to accept. By an apparent early oversight, the principals were not included in planning the District. Although four of the five original principals had left after two years of the "experiment" (largely due to tensions between Board and Principals), a core of assistant principals remained to resist many Governing Board actions and programs. Two of the new principals selected by the Governing Board were objects of "job erosion" generated by the Board of Education. In both cases the central Board refused to pay these local appointees (highly committed and qualified) their full salaries.[20] One left within two months of appointment.

[19] For further discussion of this confrontation see "Community Control at Two Bridges: What Went Wrong" by Shin'ya Ono and Vickie Gabriner in *Leviathan*, June 1969.
[20] For a further discussion of "job erosion," see "The Two Bridges Model School District: A Study of Institutional Response" by Adele Spier, M.A. Thesis in Political Science, Queens College, May 15, 1970, pp. 68-69, 75.

Neither of the Community Superintendents selected by the Governing Board to head the District was successful in countering these problems. The first Superintendent was inherited from the planning stages of the Project. Although an educational innovator with many new ideas for curriculum, he was unable to maintain a good working relationship with either the principals or the Board. He lacked a commitment to and understanding of community control. His successor provided little forceful leadership in the deeply divided District and soon lost backing from a Board anxious for progress.

DISTRICT ATTRACTS COMMITTED TEACHERS

In contrast to the stance of most supervisors and UFT teachers, about fifty young teachers strongly committed to community control have been attracted to the experiment in Two Bridges. Most have been recruited by and are members of The Teachers Incorporated, an organization inspired by Peace Corps efforts and civil rights activities of its young founders. In cooperation with the Governing Board, these teachers have acted as a political and educational cadre in the community and classroom. Some are working in teams of five with one teacher free to develop innovative materials and curriculum to be implemented by the four classroom teachers; others have developed special techniques in dealing with formerly disruptive students. There is a growing interest in the Leicestershire classroom approach among those in The Teachers Incorporated.

When the original Governing Board majority lost its majority to the well-organized and financed sympathizers of the UFT in 1969, The Teachers Incorporated lost its strong ties to the Board. More recent efforts by The Teachers Inc. and PDP to organize broad-based parent support appear to have come too late. The Governing Board, lacking a pro-community control majority, did not even join the Ocean Hill, and I.S. 201 Districts in filing the suit intended to preserve the experiments after June, 1970.

DAYTON MODEL CITIES PROGRAM

Art Thomas utilized a different vehicle for the community control struggle in Dayton, Ohio. Recognizing the potential power of Model Cities, Thomas succeeded in being named the first education coordinator for Model Cities Planning. The Model Cities area includes eleven schools in an area of Dayton that is 98 percent black. Art Thomas combined his skills in the field of education with the community organization experience of Mrs. Ruth Burgin, Deputy Director of the local anti-poverty agency. This team also drew on the knowledge of community control advocates Preston Wilcox and Rhody McCoy, who were consultants during the planning stages. The Model Cities Planning Council is composed of 27 elected representatives of the Model Cities area.

Art Thomas had been a controversial figure in his earlier position of assistant principal in a Dayton public elementary school. He helped to initiate special efforts in reading, black history, tutoring and community involvement at the school. One of his early demands as Model Cities Education Coordinator was for community access to test data retained by the Dayton Board of Education.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL COUNCILS

The strategy behind electing the eleven community school councils in Model Cities was the development of strong parent and community constituencies which would demand quality education and increasing control of the schools. The funds from Model

Cities and an OEO grant increase the community's power in contending with the school system. The eleven councils keep in contact and develop joint strategies through the Education Subcommittee of the Model Cities Planning Council. But the individual councils are also free to develop their own internal agreements and procedures for operating at their school.

Councils have been elected for nine elementary and two secondary schools and are generally composed of six elected community residents (including parents), the PTA president, the school principal, a community school director (when appropriate), two elected representatives of the teachers and one elected student. The plan includes training of council members so they may do a more effective job. Many parents and community residents were involved in drawing up the original 40 million dollar five year Model Cities proposal which also included ambitious plans for 12 month schools available 24 hours a day, pre-school for 3 and 4 year olds, use of local college resources and staff, differentiated staffing and extensive staff training.

POWERS AND STRUGGLES

The specific powers of the councils were purposely left undefined at first. The Board of Education endorsed the idea of "an equal partnership" presented to it by Thomas late in 1968. Thomas felt that parents and residents would legitimately demand control and improved quality in their schools as soon as they 1) focused their attention on them through the councils; 2) became fully aware of the low achievement levels; and 3) developed a power base from which to act. Two openly stated objectives of the councils are to "encourage citizen participation in the schools" and "upgrade interest in, respect for and *expectations* of the schools" (emphasis added).[21] Candidates for the councils are warned that they should be prepared "to withstand criticism, maintain close contact with school area citizens, attend meetings on evenings and Saturdays, study and do written assignments, speak their minds. . . ."[22] The council members attended a two week training program after their election.

The largest battle fought so far has centered on the Board of Education's repeated efforts to remove Thomas from the position of Education Project Director for Model Cities. In August 1969 the school Board signed an agreement with the Model Cities Planning Council that "Termination of the employment of the Project Director shall be consumated only upon the concurrence of the Board and the (Model Cities Planning) Council . . ."[23] In September 1969, the Board of Education relieved Art Thomas of administrative responsibilities in any school and directed him to "refrain from entering any school or grounds other than his office . . ."[24] Though Thomas continues to be a major force behind the scenes, the Planning Council and the Joint Community School Council (consisting of the chairmen of all eleven Community School Councils) have unsuccessfully fought the official ouster. One of their first reactions was to declare the schools would be open and "operating fully under the Model Cities Education component."[25] More time may tell whether Thomas' strategy has succeeded in giving "power to the people."

---

[21] From "Community School Councils", a pamphlet published by the Dayton Public Schools, February, 1969.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] "Action Stimulator #6: The Community Takes a Stand" published by Afram Associates, Incorporated, 103 West 125th Street, New York: 1969.
[24] *Ibid.*
[25] *Ibid.*

THE WOODLAWN EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOLS PROJECT

A tripartite Board composed of public school, university and community representatives has been the vehicle for greater community influence in decision-making for three East Woodlawn schools in Chicago. Although the goal of many in the project is broad-based community control, the Director states clearly that the present status is one of an experiment in community participation. Its power remains with the regular Chicago Board of Education.

STRATEGY

The Woodlawn Experimental Schools Project (WESP) is a subsystem of three schools "governed" by the Woodlawn Community Board. WESP attempts to increase the community's involvement in schools by demonstrating that the schools should and can be responsive to the needs and demands of parents and residents. Basically, there are four elements to this strategy: 1) 25 community agents who help parents and residents focus and express their desires for the schools, 2) The Woodlawn Organization's (TWO) ability to mobilize a community, 3) the responsive attitude of the I million dollars plus Woodlawn Project toward the demands which arise from the community, and 4) an extensive in-service training effort to help school staff understand and accept the needs and demands of the community. The most visible success of this strategy thus far is the naming of a black principal and a new black Project Director, as well as the growing confidence of the community in the WESP staff.[20]

The Community Agents are selected from among community residents without regard to their educational qualifications. Their effectiveness is greatly enhanced by the help of TWO. Organized by Saul Alinsky in the early 1960's, TWO is frequently held up as a model for effective grassroots community organization. Its successes over the years have enhanced the community's confidence in its own ability to bring change. TWO is an organization composed of civic, religious, business and other community groups whose delegates meet to develop a unified approach to bringing change in Woodlawn. TWO assumed that Woodlawn (and almost all communities) was already organized, in fact overorganized, and that some unity and agreement was needed among groups doing competitive or repetitive projects. The success of this approach is almost legendary across the country and in the transitional East Woodlawn community (1900: 13.4 percent nonwhite; 1960: 86.2 percent nonwhite).

A STRUGGLE FOR FUNDING

The central Project staff, the community agents and the in-service training staff is supported by a grant from Title III ESEA during 1968-1971. The early history of this grant reveals the necessity for proceeding cautiously on WESP in a city tightly controlled by Richard Daley. The original Woodlawn proposal was an outgrowth of a 1967 study conducted jointly by TWO, the University of Chicago and the Chicago Board of Education. The original proposal limited to the Wadsworth elementary upper grade center complex of two schools, was submitted at a time when federal administrators of Title III had decided to focus on inner-city needs. Obviously meeting this priority, the Woodlawn proposal was given much support in the Office of Education and was grouped informally with 25 other projects in a package called the Central

[20] Note: WESP has taken the laudable position that it will not now spend its time selling the Project through public relations materials and contracts. Therefore it has been difficult for the author to obtain current information which adequately describes its progress. General opinions of a few community residents sampled are very positive.

City Education Projects. Not only was the funding of the Wadsworth plan given preference over more than a dozen other Chicago proposals, but also the Woodlawn people were encouraged to continue their plan to submit a companion proposal for Hyde Park High School. The three schools were jointly designated the Woodlawn Project.

Despite the enthusiasm of Office of Education officials, the support of Illinois state officials and Superintendent of Schools Redmond, and the approval of the Title III National Advisory Committee, final approval was held up on . . . March 13, 1968. Congressman Puchinski (a powerful member of the House Education and Labor Committee, Representative of a Chicago district, and friend of Mayor Richard K. Daley) had notified the Office of Education that Chicago area Congressman opposed the funding of WESP. Puchinski singled out the lack of Community Urban Progress Center (UPC) representation on the tripartite Woodlawn Community Board. (OEO's community action agency in Chicago is widely recognized as being an obedient extension of Mayor Daley's office. It is interesting to note that prior to Puchinski's protests on WESP the controversy surrounding the funding of the Blackstone Rangers by OEO—done despite the CAA and Daley's opposition—had surfaced.) Although the Woodlawn Community Board was restructured to include two UPC representatives, Puchinski did not withdraw his opposition. The WESP grant was made quietly. The UPC representatives were never named.

CHANGES IN BOARD AND STAFF

The original Woodlawn Board was composed of seven representatives each from the Chicago Board of Education, the University of Chicago, and TWO. The University of Chicago representatives often acted as important allies to the community in their early attempts to explain their needs to the Board of Education representatives. In 1969 the Woodlawn Board was reconstituted, giving TWO three positions formerly held by university representatives. The Board of Education contingent includes two students, four teachers and the District Superintendent. Members are chosen by each of the three participating institutions. Each delegation elects a chairman and has a veto. Although the need foragreement among all three groups has often prevented significant actions at the Board level, the WESP staff has had the freedom to proceed within the outline of the proposal to organize the parents and community. The naming of an outstanding black director to head WESP in 1969 has led to greatly increased confidence in the community. Although the regular teaching and administrative staff in the three schools is not formally accountable to WESP, the more than one million dollar per year budget of the Woodlawn Project is a great inducement for cooperation in itself. The community slowly discovers that WESP 1) listens to their demands, 2) has some resources to back these demands and 3) is beginning to get some good results.[37]

THE MORGAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Although a number of individual schools have established some degree of *de facto* independence and control within public school systems, the Morgan Community School is the only single, on-going school to have gained delegated authority while continuing to receive regular public funds. Its location in predominantly black Washington, D.C.,

[37] An eleven page description of programs and some early results are presented in "Status Report" prepared by the Director of WESP, February 1, 1970. For example, the Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test reveals that 62 percent of the first graders tested in 1969 were judged "ready" for reading as compared to less than forty percent ready in all four years prior to WESP.

where a majority of the teachers are black (as is the teachers' union leadership) has been helpful in the successful struggle for power.

HISTORY

Parents in the Adams-Morgan area of Northwest Washington has been accustomed to having a superior school in their community until about 1955. As the community's population speeded its transition from white to predominantly black residents, services at the Morgan School deteriorated and the school became overcrowded. The Adams-Morgan Community Council developed as a forum for concerned residents during the late 50's and the 60's. Young white liberals moving into the neighborhood in the early 1960's added their concerns to those of the black residents. Fruitless efforts by small delegations and groups to improve the Morgan School through minor changes further frustrated local parents and residents. An open meeting of nearly one hundred residents was organized; they decided to propose that the Adams and Morgan Schools be community run. Some of the founders assert that Antioch College was called upon to act as a partner in the effort when Superintendent of Schools Carl Hansen's acceptance of the plan was given contingent on involvement of some university; others state that Antioch's involvement was included in the original proposal on the urging of some local residents who had attended Antioch.

In any case, Hansen was pleased with Antioch's involvement but decided to limit the experiment to one school (Morgan) until success warranted the addition of Adams. Hansen's support was important in gaining the Board of Education's approval on May 17, 1967. Asking for two schools and allowing the Superintendent the decision to limit the "experiment" to one was probably important to the success of the community. The same strategy is common in collective bargaining.

The Morgan Community School opened in the fall of 1967. Both Antioch and community residents would now admit that the rush to make major changes in such a short time caused many early problems.[28] The short-lived, Antioch-recruited Director of the program has written a widely-read critical essay about this early period.[29] Less widely known is the discontent of some community residents about the Director's attitude toward low income black people. The uncertainties and confusion of the "partnership" between Antioch and the community soon led to the clear assertion of leadership by the Morgan Community School Board and the man they had selected as Principal, Ken Haskins.

Since that first year, Morgan's child-centered curriculum and community-centered activities have grown to be proud examples acknowledged by many educators and younger community schools. In 1969 the Adams School was authorized by the D. C. Board of Education to be a community school following the same general model as Morgan.

THE COMMUNITY BOARD

The Community School Board forcefully asserts that "the public schools belong to the community" and promote a healthy two-way interaction between community and

[28] Antioch's Board of Trustees requested in the summer of 1967 that the change be delayed for a year but community people were anxious to proceed. See also interview (May, 1968, with Sheila Gordon) with Bishop Marie Reed, Chairman of the Morgan School Board, for community attitudes. Files of the Institute for Community Studies, Queens College.

[29] Paul Lauter, "The Short Happy Life of the Morgan School", in the *Harvard Education Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2, Spring 1968, pp. 235-262.

school. Morgan Community School has been the center for a wide variety of community functions, including a funeral and weddings. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit *their* school. Free afternoon and evening classes for children and adults include fine arts, sewing, driver education, typing and high school equivalency.

The Community Board has taken on additional functions and powers as it grows through having the responsibility to make decisions about various aspects of the school. The Board has exerted control in determining staffing patterns and selecting staff, setting the curriculum, determining partial allocation of funds received from D. C. Schools and outside sources; determining the use of the physical plant and selecting among outside resources (universities, consultants, etc.) that can help. Recently the Board has set a precedent in the District of Columbia School System by securing the power to select its own architect for the design of a new Morgan Community School building. The building is to be designed in direct response to the stated needs and desires of students and community residents.

One of the first actions of the Board in 1967 was to search for, interview and select a principal. The only restrictions set by the D. C. Board of Education were that the candidates must hold masters degrees—in any area. The Board's choice, Ken Haskins, holds his degree in social work and had never been a principal or teacher prior to his appointment at Morgan. Recognizing Haskins sensitivity to the needs and wishes of the community and children, the Board was very pleased with the leadership shown by him. His ability to learn the specifics of education on the job while exerting strong leadership provides an extremely positive example for those who advocate bringing non-educators into positions of authority in school systems.

The Morgan Community Board contains broad representation from school and community among its fifteen members: seven parents, six community residents (three of these must be 16 to 23 years of age), and two staff. Each category has its own electoral constituency. The competition among community residents is particularly strong. In the summer 1968 election almost 200 young adults and residents chose among 19 candidates for the six positions; 41 parents chose among nine parent candidates.[30] The participation of young adults elected to the Board has been erratic at times; abolition of the "young adult" category has been reluctantly considered.

CLASSROOMS AND CURRICULUM

The strong stamp of Ken Haskins sensitivity has been left on the school (Haskins left Morgan to go to Harvard after the 1968-69 school year). Responding to parents desires that their children have the tools to "survive with dignity in this society" and not be physically or emotionally abused in the process, Haskins and the Community Board chose to generally follow the model of the British Infant School because of its flexibility to meet the particular needs and interests of the Morgan children and community. Morgan attempts to surround the child, as well as parents and staff, with opportunities to grow through exciting materials, concepts and content. Teacher train-

[30] A more complete breakdown appears in the July 31, 1968 report by Sheila Gordon, for the Institute for Community Studies (I.C.S.) at Queens College (see I.C.S. files):

Voters in:		*For positions:*	*# of candidates*
1967	*1968*		*in 1968*
77	137	3 adult parents	14
72	57	3 young adults	5
57	41	7 parents	9

36

ing is directed toward attitudes: helping teachers to believe that children can pursue learning on their own initiative when the teacher understands and responds to the natural course of child development. Competition is deemphasized in classrooms; children are not to be motivated by a fear of being considered intellectualy inferior. Similarly, no children were suspended from Morgan for misbehavior during its first two years under community control.

Help in implementation of the British Infant School approach for young children (aged 5-7) has come from a Follow-Through grant and consultants from the Educational Development Center in Boston. Children of all ages are assigned to classrooms randomly in vertical groups usually spanning three age levels (e.g. 5-7, 7-9, 8-10 etc.). There are a total of 750 children at Morgan: 98 percent are black, 80 percent are poor. Each classroom of approximately thirty children is served by a team of one teacher and one or two community interns. Although the atmosphere varies greatly from room to room according to the skills and experience of the teacher and his ability to work with the community interns, the general spirit of Morgan is one of great activity and involvement as children pursue their own interests. Haskins has explained that teachers with experience in the regular public school system are especially enthusiastic about Morgan, its atmosphere and community control that contrast sharply with most urban public schools.

The direct funding of the federal Follow Through funds to the Morgan Community School instead of through the D. C. Board of Education is unprecedented. Such funding allows the Morgan Community Board to exert more control in its own programs. Actually, the D. C. Board has been extremely cooperative in allowing Morgan to run its own affairs. Only bureaucratic regulations (enforced by middle bureaucrats) limiting the hiring of personnel and the planning of the renovated Annex have caused difficulties. Attempts to add Africans (who were studying for their bachelors degrees in D. C. area colleges) to teach African language and culture was difficult; firing one of them later was even more difficult.

FUNDS AND STAFF

A larger constraint on Morgan's flexibility to determine its own directions has been limited funds. Instead of providing support requisite to the needs of the highly creative and experimental Morgan program, the D. C. Board provides funds equivalent to the normal, abysmal Washington elementary school. Thus the principal has the added burden of raising outside funds for new programs. Follow Through and another Office of Education grant have come in response to this search for outside resources. Small grants have been provided by Ford Foundation to run the community election one year and for some activities of the Board members. Such activities include visits to other model schools and conferences (which would be supported by regular operating funds in many suburban school districts).

Candidates for staff positions are interviewed by the Personnel Committee of the Community Board. Recommendations are passed on by the Board itself. In addition to the approximately twenty-eight certified teachers, the Board has hired thirty parents and local residents as community interns to assist in the classroom and reach out into the community. The Board has insisted that no educational requirements be used in screening for interns, instead they are selected for their skill in working with children and the community. An early problem of maintaining relations between interns and very permissive young teachers has diminished with discussion, and the joint weathering of crises.

Morgan has emphasized staff development from its inception as a community school. Although Antioch no longer shares decision-making power, its resources continue to be used. Twelve of twenty-eight professional teachers were enrolled in an Antioch M.A.T. program during 1969-70. The Follow Through staff receives monthly in-service training from the Educational Development Center. An Office of Education grant in the summer of 1969 allowed Morgan to strengthen further their staff development efforts. A year long Ford Foundation grant beginning in May, 1970, provides additional funds to "increase the effectiveness of school personnel."

THE FUTURE

The Ford grant also provides funds to promote further the central theme of Morgan: fostering "greater involvement of parents, students and community residents in the educational process."[31] The current principal, John Anthony, stresses that "the school must continue to take its character from the nature of the people living in the community. The total staff must continue to be accountable to the community. The educational program at Morgan must continue to be relevant and responsive to the needs of the children and community."[32] During the 1969-70 school year, Board members have become more vocal about what they feel these needs are. Since not all agree, intensive discussions about an appropriate educational philosopsy have included both parents and staff. Some may choose to leave the School as a new philosophy emerges.

COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT (CCED)

Carving out an entirely new school system within a state which already has many vested interests in the form of already established districts is an extremely difficult task; to make it parent controlled is even more difficult. The Committee for Community Education Development (CCED), a private, non-profit corporation, utilized a dual strategy in having successfully enacted a state law authorizing three new school systems in Massachusetts. First the systems were primarily characterized as innovative; second, the first such system (to be implemented by CCED) would enroll students from at least three separate existing school districts. This latter provision is designed to allow racial and economic integration in a metropolitan area. The three school districts chosen were Boston (low income black and white from Roxbury, Dorchester, South End and Charleston), Cambridge (mixed economically and racially), and Brookline (a white, middle class suburb).

STRATEGY: INNOVATION AND INTEGRATION

The brilliant strategy developed in two years of planning starting in 1965 led to the enactment of the Willis-Harrington Act in November, 1967. Testifying in its support at hearings conducted by the State Senate were a wide variety of powerful groups including the often reactionary Boston School Committee,[33] the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and the Massachusetts Teachers Association. It seemed that no one could come out in opposition to innovation! Quietly under the loud banner of innovation were two potentially controversial provisions: a) a waiving of all normal certification requirements for teaching staffs in the new system and b) "the direct

[31] Grant purposes as reported in letter to the author from John Anthony, Principal, Morgan Community School, May 8, 1970.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 2.
[33] Note: "School Committees" are the equivalent of Boards of Education in most other states.

participation by members of the communities" in the control and operation of the schools. The ideas and support of at least three nationally known figures were critical: Boston Model Cities Administrator, Paul Parks, and educators Dr. Jerome Wiesner and Dr. Jerry Zacharias.

The prospect of ongoing public support for this venture encouraged the Ford Foundation to give planning grants of 25,000 dollars (1967) and 390,000 dollars (1968). An additional grant may be made in 1970 to plan for expansion. Designation of the system as a "local education agency" will qualify it to receive Title I and III ESEA and other federal funds.

During the 1969-70 school year CCED began operation with approximately 75 white and 75 black children attending temporary quarters in Roxbury. Operating money for this program for 5 to 10 year olds is provided by a state appropriation of 500,000 dollars. Hopeful of greater state support in the future, CCED intends to enlarge the Roxbury enrollment to 250 and open another center of the same size during 1970-71. Ultimately the system would include 2000 students between the ages of 3 and 18 in a league of small schools in varied communities. Children would utilize many community resources (not just go on field trips) and attend different schools in the various communities during different years in what has been designated the "floating school" concept.

GOVERNING BOARD

However, the complexities of involving students from a number of communities has also created difficulties. Originally the prestige CCED Board of university educators, administrators, and community leaders was to relinquish control of the system to a predominantly parent controlled board "at the earliest possible date consistent with requirements of the legislation and the judgments of the State Department of Education."[24] This new Board was to consist of not more than 20 members: six parents, three students, three members of the staff, three representatives from significant organizations in the wider community and three representatives from CCED. Parents, students, and staff were to elect their own representatives; they would then select the three community representatives. However, parents who have been involved on the staff and in parents meetings are now questioning this plan.

Parents from twenty-three rather than the originally proposed six communities are now involved with the CCED plan. Some assert that separate boards for the individual schools will be necessary to provide adequate levels of participation and a direct accountability. A broader-based Board for all the schools could have limited powers of coordination. Although some have been critical of the slow transition to community control, the CCED Board claims that the final decision about the structure of the permanent boards and the method of implementing a transfer of power from the CCED Board must and will be made by the parents.[25]

CURRICULUM, BUREAUCRACY, THE FUTURE

Utilizing many materialls and a low student to adult ratio, the CCED curriculum combines the non-directive, individualized learning of the Leicestershire Model with a family group. Each family group includes ten children and one teacher who meet together three times each day with emphasis on making sense of their own and others'

[24] CCED Proposal to Ford Foundation, November 29, 1967.
[25] CCED Proposal to Ford Foundation, December, 1969.

behavior. Often this involves understanding how someone behaved during the non-directive learning times or during an activity which explores the local community and its resources. This exciting—but difficult to develop—curriculum plan depends on the recruitment of a particularly strong staff. Bureaucratic problems have hampered staff recruitment as well as other aspects of the CCED school.

The founders of CCED believed that a system directly under the aegis of the state would avoid most of the petty regulations and licensing that most local districts have built up over years and which restricts much innovation. It is ironic to note that CCED's greatest early problems have been state level restrictions. Although the Willis Harrington Act specifically allowed the new system to hire without regard to usual teacher certification requirements, the law did not anticipate the many other restrictions which are faced by any program under direct state auspices. CCED is a pioneer; the State of Massachusetts has never before directly conducted a school. Current state law requires bidding procedures be followed in requisitions involving more than fifty dollars. State regulations on rental and purchase of buildings for state functions have delayed or prohibited acquisition of a number of buildings. School facilities are very difficult to find as it is in Roxbury. Still quartered in temporary facilities, CCED intends to have the parents and staff design a permanent building which will meet state standards.

As the CCED system successfully deals with the restrictions, they hope to increase their influence over other public schools in the state. As an arm of the State Department of Education, the system has ready entry into local systems. They are cooperating with others in these systems in teacher training and in testing and evaluating new methods and materials. Recall also that the original Willis-Harrington Act authorizes two other innovative new systems in other parts of Massachusetts. These systems could further build on the efforts of the CCED founded schools.

EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL FREEDOM ANNEX

It is not merely coincidence that most of the parent and community control efforts emphasize the elementary school level. Parents are more frequently in close contact with each other about their concerns when their children are in a small neighborhood elementary school than in a broad-based high school. Parents are also more optimistic about the possibilities of making a difference in their child's life when they can intervene in the early years of education. In areas where schools are bad at all levels, it is almost impossible to mobilize the parents around the high schools. The students themselves are more likely to become the "community."

STUDENT CONTROL

The Modern Strivers at Eastern High School in Washington became the nucleus of such a community in 1968. Concerned at first about the cafeteria conditions in Eastern High School, a 99+ percent black school serving a low income area, about a dozen students then began talking about larger issues. They were especially concerned about the lack of black history, culture and language in the school curriculum.

Impatient with the slow changes in public schools, the students decided to set up their own independent high school. The students were given some limited help by a few teachers they trusted. One teacher was nearly drafted because of his support of the militant students (the principal wrote a letter to his draft board).

By September of 1968, the students had raised approximately 41,000 dollars from

individuals and the Taconic Foundation. A matching grant was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Classroom space was provided in a Lutheran Church, underutilized by its white congregation. The Washington Teachers Union (a local of the AFT) provided resources and acted as a conduit for some of the funds until the school was incorporated in the fall of 1968 as the Freedom Corporation, a non-profit organization.

Eleven full time teachers were selected by the students. All but the African language teachers (who are natives of Africa) have bachelors degrees. The school is governed by a Board of Directors elected annually in a general meeting of all the students and teachers. Seventy-five percent of the Board Members are students; the Chairman or President is a student. Parents and community residents qualify as non-voting members of the corporation. The School has remained relatively small because of the self-imposed requirement of parental permission for enrollment of any student.

ACCREDITED COURSES

In some ways the School gains from both private and public worlds. Although the students have complete independence from the public school in determining Freedom School policy, they nevertheless get credits for their study through the public school system. Students attend their regular high school (most are from Eastern) in the morning and may take up to three courses for credit at the Freedom Annex in the afternoons. Afternoon attendance records are reported back to the public school. Pass-fail grades earned at the Freedom School appear on the students' regular report cards. The courses count as electives within the regular Carnegie Unit System supervised by the Middle States Association.

Courses offered during the 1969-70 school year include black history, black literature, black philosophy, black music, art and drama, contemporary problems, English and math reinforcement, third world studies, community organization and African languages. The atmosphere of the school, as well as the listing of courses, reflects the emphasis on blackness. Soul music, instead of a bell, signals the time to change classes. Teachers and students address each other as "brother" or "sister."

The initiative of the founders and the continued enthusiasm and involvement of the students has encouraged "outsiders" to support the School. After visits to several classes at the Freedom Annex, an Assistant Superintendent of the D.C. public school system has recommended inclusion of a student-run wing in each high school that is newly built or renovated. This kind of reaction suggests that some public funds will be available for the Annex and similar student efforts in the future.

ANACOSTIA COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROJECT

> "Washington's 150,000 school children and their parents . . . must be able to exercise one of their most fundamental rights. They must have a voice which can be heard in the operation of their school."

The above quote from President Johnson's speech of March, 1968 calling for a 10 million dollar program in the District of Columbia is usually given as the origin of the present Anacostia Community School Project (ACSP). Actually, of course, a good deal of discussion and consideration by the Johnson Administration preceded this public statement. Although some credit a few education staff people in the Bureau of

the Budget with the original idea as a response to the *Passow Report* released in late 1967, the inclusion of the concept of "a voice . . . in the operation of their school" can be traced to earlier struggles for community control and Black Power. By 1967 many educational program planners in the Administration were discussing demands for community controlled schools. All agreed that some kind of community involvement was good; few advocated extensive community control.

BACKGROUND: SETTING AND PLANNING

Initially only a small component in a larger plan for "Excellence in Urban Education," community participation and control has become the central concept for structural change in ACSP. The concept was nurtured and expanded by community residents and consultants as the plans for ACSP evolved from community workshops in the Summer of 1968.

The earlier problem of selecting a site from among the many educationally deficient areas of Washington preceded the workshops. All areas of the city wanted and felt they deserved the proposed ten million dollar program. An ad hoc community committee selected by the Community Council (composed of representatives of 75 community organizations) made the selection based on criteria suggested by officials of a variety of city and federal agencies. They recommended the low income, largely black areas of Anacostia in far Southeast Washington. The city Board of Education approved the choice of this area—which includes eight elementary schools, two junior highs and a high school enrolling a total of 15,000 students. (This was nearly double the official capacity.) The area's juvenile crime rate is high; the school drop-out rate is higher than in any other section of the city.

A staff and consultants were hired in the Spring of 1968 to set up the summer workshop in which parents, students, teachers and community representatives would plan the Anacostia project. After a series of preliminary meetings with community leaders, principals, teacher union officials and teachers, a campaign using radio, press, church and organizational announcements and door-to-door visits was launched to bring people to a day-long Community Information Conference. Ten people were selected by those at the conference to form the nucleus of an Ad Hoc Community Planning Council. The Council was later expanded and served as the governing board until community elections were conducted in November of 1969.

During July, 1968, 280 Anacostia parents, students, teachers and community representatives met together daily to discuss the educational needs of the community and develop a proposal. Each participant was paid 15 dollars a day. Small groups made visits to New York City, Philadelphia, Boston and Michigan to inspect school innovations. Their proposal included a model early childhood unit, a reading improvement program, in-service training programs, adult education and courses in black history, sex education, computer programming and current business practices. Although the President had requested 10 million dollars for the first year of the Aanacostia project, workshop participants set their needs at 15 million dollars. Congress appropriated one million dollars for the first year. Another appropriation of under 1 million dollars was made to continue the Project in 1970. Due to this limitation in funding only two of twenty-five programs of ACSP are fully operational: a reading component employing over one hundred community reading assistants and the "administration and community education component." [36] The latter is the staff and board structure through which parents and community residents can have their voices heard.

[36] Discussed by ACSP Director, William Rice in January, 1970 speech.

THE BOARD: POWERS AND RELATIONS WITH TEACHERS

Each of the eleven schools is responsive to an elected Neighborhood School Board composed of ten parents, three teachers, three community residents at large, three youths, and one community reading assistant. The Neighborhood Boards are an advisory group to the 24 member Anacostia Community Area School Board which includes one representative from each of the Neighborhood Boards, two students from the secondary schools and an out-of-school youth, one community reading assistant, three teachers—each representing a level of instruction—and six residents-at-large. Many of the powers and functions of the area board evolve as they respond to needs, establish programs, and are funded for activities. Powers and functions presently delegated to Anacostia by the D.C. Board of Education include:[37]

a. Screening and selecting of its own personnel. And recommending them to the Board of Education for appointment.
b. Revising and adding to the curriculum.
c. Entering into separate contracts.
d. Writing position descriptions for jobs peculiar to the Project and necessary to carry out new operations.
e. Programming its own funds and regular funds.
f. Participating in budget formulation.

ACSP also may enter into sub-contractual arrangements directly with the Washington Teachers Union. Open communication with the extremely cooperative President of the union has helped to ensure a smooth transition to greater community powers. Only thirty-six of the 430 teachers in Project schools chose to leave after the first year. The average attrition rate in D.C. Schools is 14 percent yearly. The sharp contrast with union opposition in New York City is partly due to the fact that a majority of Washington's teachers are blacks.

A controversy in 1969 involving dissatisfied teachers was handled through the normal union grievance structure. Dissatisfied teachers are allowed to transfer to other schools with no repercussions.

SUBCONTRACTED ELECTIONS

The Office of Education (OE) has been influential in shaping the final form of ACSP's programs. Rather than providing the one million dollars in a block grant to Anacostia, OE has required individual proposals for each project. Most proposals have been returned to ACSP for changes which would make them more acceptable to OE. Although the Superintendent of Schools and city-wide Board of Education have consistently been very supportive and helpful to the Anacostia Project, bureaucratic regulations have encouraged the Project to contract with consulting firms rather than hire staff directly. The reading program, as with the first summer Workshop, is conducted by General Learning Corporation. The community board elections and training of board members was done under a contract with Westinghouse Learning Corporation.

It is interesting to trace Anacostia's growth of trust in a few "outsiders". For example, Sylvester Williams, who was responsible for the Westinghouse contract, had formerly demonstrated his commitment to Anacostia and community control by his earlier work as a special assistant to the Superintendent of Schools in Washington. He

[37] *Ibid.*

had acted as a "facilitator" for the wishes of ACSP rather than the more normal role of bureaucratic opponent. As Westinghouse's Chief Consultant for the November, 1969, Anacostia election, Williams helped design a complex election procedure that registered over 12,000 parents, residents, teachers, students, and community reading assistants. When parents and residents failed to turn out in large numbers for the voting, a second effort was made to turn out the vote with the assistance of students in the high school.

It will be interesting to follow the pattern of voting over the course of a few years. Since the Anacostia Project was not created in response to organized discontent in that particular community, issues are not yet focused. Also, District of Collumbia residents have little previous electoral history to establish voting as a habit. As Boards begin to exercise powers, demand accountability in schools, and spend project funds in the community, interest in school elections may well increase. Those community residents who have been directly affected by project funds, the community reading assistants, voted at a rate of nearly ninety percent.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FOLLOW-THROUGH PARENT IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS

Although American education is generally controlled by state and local governments, external money can strongly influence local decisions. Increased federal expenditures in education during the last five years provide many examples of this subtle "control." The spreading influence of the federal bureaucracy is regularly attacked as increasing centralization of control; actually some federal expenditures can and have been a vehicle for decentralized, broad-based *local* control. At Rough Rock, the Anti-Poverty Program's CAP Demonstration dollars were a catalyst for moving control of the Navajo school from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to a board of seven Navajos (democratically elected by their tribal chapters) and their staff.

Follow Through, the Office of Education's follow-up of OEO's Headstart Program, has very effectively used a small portion of its funds to promote broad-based local control in a few Follow Through projects. Although Model Cities, all OEO programs, ESEA Title I and Great Cities Title III espouse parent participation or "maximum feasible participation . . .", none have taken the steps toward parent control that Follow Through has. By starting in more receptive schools and states, Follow Through has begun to develop some successful parent models which will soon be spread further. Since Follow Through's whole strategy has been one of developing many different curriculum models, a few models which are built around a shift in local powers are less difficult to defend to Congress. In addition to providing much needed continuing support for already established private and public community schools such as Highland Park, Roxbury, Morgan, East Harlem Block and Rough Rock, Follow Through has has induced seven local school districts to develop "parent-implementation" models.

Usually school districts newly selected to develop Follilow Through Projects are given a choice among ten to twenty variations of models (mostly in curriculum). Despite the fact that selection of an approach is supposed to be a joint effort of school officials, the local Community Action Program and Headstart parents, the school system almost invariably has had its way. School districts are extremely reluctant to give up some of their power to parents—as demanded by the "parent-implementation" model

—when they can select a safe curriculum model instead. Of more than one hundred districts making such selections, only East St. Louis, Illinois, freely chose a type of parent control.

To induce additional local districts to try a more extensive "parent-implemented" approach, Follow Through enlisted the aid of state departments of education in Colorado, Arkansas, Michigan, New Jersey, and three other states.

In May of 1968, Follow Through informed state department representatives that limited funds were available for districts adventuresome enough to try this controversial structure. Arkansas and Colorado identified local districts anxious to have Follow Through money and willing to accept the federal Special Grant Terms and Conditions designed to protect parent power in most aspects of the programs:

> ... The parents shall have the primary responsibility and authority for determining the specific components of the program plan and the means and procedures by which these components will be carried out ...
>
> Parents shall have at least an equal role in the recruiting of candidates for coordinator and other program staff, in the setting of criteria for their selection, and in their final selection and retention.

The specific planning, fiscal and personnel powers and structures have varied in the two districts (Pulaski County, Arkansas; Greeley, Colorado) developed in the summer of 1968. A third project in Flint, Michigan, was added in 1969. Three more (not described here) are to be funded beginning with the 1970-71 school year. They are in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Tucson, Arizona, and Lansing, Michigan.

EAST ST. LOUIS

Spurred on by a determined CAP representative, East St. Louis school officials agreed in 1968 to a limited amount of parent control: the parents could select the curriculum model, make some staff selection and recruitment and initiate major program revisions when necessary. The parent policy committee also plans monthly parent training sessions and activities; they control funds for parent education, entertainment and travel.

During a summer planning period in 1968, neighborhood parent workers visited homes to inform parents of 250 eligible first graders in East St. Louis about the program. Meetings of the parents led to formation of a volunteer Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)—later elected— and ten parents who would visit two projects using different curriculum approaches. After visits to the highly structured Bereiter Engelmann program in Urbana, Illinois, and a less structured community school in New York City, this committee made its recommendation to the PAC. The parents selected the Bereiter Engelmann approach.

The elected PAC in East St. Louis recruits, interviews and selects para-professional staff for the program. Although central administration officials in the East St. Louis educational bureaucracy are gradually accepting the parent's role, the Board of Education has been reluctant to approve expansion of the project and the consequent hiring of more para-professionals. The persistence of the parents, however, has gained approval for extension of the program to include kindergarten through the third grade in 1970-71.

PULASKI COUNTY, ARKANSAS

Sixty parents gathered in July, 1968, at the College Station Elementary School, a formerly all-black school in white controlled Pulaski County, Arkansas. Ken Haskins, then principal of the Morgan School in Washington, conducted most of the meeting. Haskins explained how "community control" had worked at the Morgan School and then asked these parents of sixty entering first graders what they wanted for their school children. The Southern black parents in the audience were reluctant to speak out in such a large group, so the meeting was divided into three smaller groups and discussions usually started around the topic "What did your children have in Headstart that they are not getting in elementary School?" A list of desires was then developed: smaller class size, elimination of the fee for books and supplies (Arkansas requires most parents to pay up to seven dollars a child each year), and miscellaneous other suggestions.

At the end of the meeting a group of eleven parents volunteered to form an interim board to set the project's specific plans. Meeting with Ken Haskins, the parents decided the first priorities were selection of a director and election of a governing board. With the assistance of the local community action agency, the parents identified three potential directors for their program. After extensive interviews with the candidates, the parent Board selected a man with both community and school experience: formerly a social worker in the poverty program and former principal and teacher in the county schools. The County Board had little problem accepting this "school man." The parent Board "selected" the three regular first grade teachers and recruited candidates for a fourth class they were creating to cut class size. Wishing to integrate College Station's teaching staff for the first time, the Board interviewed only white applicants. Their choice was made after an hour-long probing interview. The Board also recruited, interviewed and selected community aides.

In the fall of 1968, the ten parents then on the Board decided to invite the four teachers to sit on the Board. Some College Station parents state that this partnership has broken through some of the suspicion and distance they have previously felt toward teachers.[88]

The Board has also selected a few consultants (from Philadelphia and Little Rock) on the basis of recommendations from the Arkansas State Department of Education and Follolw-Through. In effect, "parent implementation" in College Station has brought an injection of fresh external ideas despite the parochial, rural setting and change-resisting County Board of Education.[89] Although the College Station classroom approach could not yet be characterized as a single, distinctive innovative approach, a number of new motivational techniques in reading and math are being adopted by enthusiastic teachers. No child is failed in the program's ungraded class arrangement. The school day lasts from 7 A.M. to 5 P.M. for children of working parents. Parent planners have chosen to stress field trips since they know that many children get little further than their doorsteps in this rural community in the outskirts of Little Rock.

Early results are encouraging. Absenteeism is 75 percent lower among participating children. Tests administered after nearly two years of the parent implemented program

[88] Interviews with Mrs. Inez Strickland and Mrs. Fannie Mason, parents, 10 A.M. and 11 A.M. January 10, 1969. College Station, Arkansas. Also based on Board meeting and discussion of January 9, 1969, 8 P.M.

[89] Note: The Pulaski County School District was involved a few years ago in a controversy over teaching of evolution. It has also teetered on the verge of losing all federal funds due to resistance to integration.

reveal that second graders "place as high in most skill areas on the California Achievement Test in arithmetic and reading as 3rd grade children in the same school who have not had Follow-Through." [40]

GREELEY

Greeley, Colorado provides a different setting for a parent-implementation model. A city of 44,000 located in a prosperous farming area 55 miles north of Denver, Greeley contains a sizeable low income Mexican-American sub-community.

Since Greeley had unsuccessfully applied for Follow Through projects through normal channels, school officials welcomed the prospect of being specially funded. Misunderstanding the thrust of parent-implementation, however, Greeley had already drawn up a fairly detailed proposal by the time the first Follow Through consultants (led by Tony Ward, then Director of the East Harlem Block Schools) arrived in August, 1968. Explaining that parent-implementation meant parent planning *from the beginning,* the consultants proceeded to visit most of the forty families to be included (another 40 children are added each year) and organize a parent meeting. After an explicit description of the potential powers of the parents and a brief description of some parent-controlled schools, the consultants left the parents alone to set their own priorities and directions. It was made clear that the money from Follow Through (30,000 dollars in 1968-69) would be available for their children's education only if the parents organized and reached decisions about its expenditure. Parents selected an eight member (later reduced to seven) interim Board, selected a local school staff member to be director and set times for future meetings. Within a few weeks they had also hired a kindergarten teacher, family contact worker and classroom aide.

Their rapid action was somewhat surprising—and partly regretted. The Director, hardly known to the parents and not sympathetic with parent-control, was asked to resign by the Board ten months later. Board members point out that "this first year was a hard struggle and the Board learned from their mistakes. There was a great turn-over of Board members but things kept moving." [41] In the summer of 1969 they decided to hire a new Director; they selected a Mexican-American who was referred with the help of the local school district. The new Director came into the program vaguely aware of Follow Through but learned rapidly.

Predominantly Mexican-American, the students are being taught in both English and Spanish at the kindergarten level. Instead of keeping most Follow Through children together (as in the kindergarten in 1968-69), the parents have chosen to integrate their eighty children into the three first grade and two kindergarten classes. For the 1969-70 school year the Parent Board selected additional aides, a Spanish teacher, and a Follow Through classroom teacher. The parents also selected a "model sponsor" or general curriculum approach which is to be developed in the Greeley classrooms with the help of David Weikart from Michigan. The selection of this particular approach was made after visiting other schools and seeing presentations of other possible curricula.

Each Board member has a personal notebook which contains past meeting minutes, major reports and resolutions, as well as federal Follow Through or other regulations which may affect their operation and control of the Greeley program. Full parent

[40] U.S. Office of Education, "Focus on Follow-Through," March 1970 newletter, p. 1.

[41] This was written by Billie C. Martinez (Chairman), Marge Feurt (Co-Chairman) and Marge Shepherd in response to the author's original draft of this sketch. May, 1970.

control of federal Follow Through funds has been unquestioned. The Title I Director and other local school officials coordinate with the parents in planning the expenditure of Title I and local funds.

FLINT, MICHIGAN

A variation on the Parent Implementation model is being tried in Flint. An elected parent committee made major planning decisions, selected a director, and then delegated to him responsibility for implementation and administration. Although it is asserted that the parents will continue to have ultimate control over the future program through their right to review, this can only be tested in time. The parent committee has its own funds for committee travel, meetings, conferences, community activities and parent projects.

Soon after the Michigan State Department of Education received a planning grant in November 1968, parents from each of five Headstart classrooms elected two representatives to form the planning committee. This committee later selected community representatives (doctor, minister, Urban League official, etc.) to help advise them. However, the planning was done by the ten parents assisted by a Follow-Through consultant, an elementary education director for the Flint Schools, and a parent coordinator.

The parent committee visited, viewed films, or heard descriptions of a variety of possible models for their kindergarten classroom program due to begin in September 1969. On April 1st, 1969, they unanimously selected the Bereiter Engelmann (B-E) approach which stresses the teaching of essential basic skills and systematic reinforcement of positive behavior and learning. The B-E method utilizes highly structured learning procedures in small groups. The parents offered no second choice of a model.

The parents also formed small committees to determine their needs for comprehensive services to their children. These committees met with a nutritionist, doctor, dentist, psychologist, sociologist, and other consultants. They then reported their recommendations back to the full parent committee which set priorities for the final proposal or operating plan. The many components to the Flint program reflects the general philosophy of Follow-Through: concern for serving all the needs of the child. The great variety of personnel providing these services requires much coordination in the classroom. Flint has estimated that each classroom will have up to sixteen part-time people working in it, during each week. This includes seven volunteers (four parents), but not the full-time teacher and aids. Under this plan, the classroom teacher must be as much a "coordinator" or "administrator" as she is a teacher, because of her responsibilities with all who work in or visit her classroom.

Each classroom contains about twenty-five children. The first year enrollment is 191 kindergarten children. Most are from "poverty" families as defined by the OEO income guidelines. Eighty nine percent are black.

The parents placed their greatest emphasis on instruction and good quality teaching; rated next in importance were medical, dental and nutritional services. As part of the nutritional services they chose to include breakfast and lunch for the children.

The parents have selected a director to administer their program. Also the original chairman of the parents committee has been hired as parent coordinator. A woman of great energy and natural talent, this mother's leadership has been crucial in early

development of the program. Her energies are now turned to involving a wide base of parental support and participation in the program and in continuing to monitor the quality of the program provided for her own and the other parents' children.

CHAPTER IV
INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

When a higher authority has ultimate control over the bulk of a school's funds (as is always true of the public sub-systems described in Chapter III), community decision-making can always be limited. However, the advantages of establishing schools totally independent of public authorities are balanced by the frustrations of securing adequate and flexible funding. Without exception, the major problem facing independent parent and community schools is funding.

TWO NEW STRATEGIES

Although a number of schools are determined to continue the struggle to eke more funds out of the current patchwork of sources, two distinct strategies to secure public funds emerge from among some parents and staff members of independent schools. The majority value their independence too much to consider deep involvement with public systems. They look to the precedent for public funding of non-public schools now being established in nearly a dozen state laws passed since 1968. Similarly attractive is the talk of parent voucher systems which would provide parents money to choose these non-public community schools. Enactment of a voucher system or state laws providing support of non-public schools could be speeded by a proliferation of independent schools with similar needs for funds, as well as a political alliance with the Parochial schools. At least one legal suit has been filed to demand public funds for independent community schools. The brief asserts, with great justification, that the guarantee of integrated educatiional opportunity is not being provided by the public schools. Therefore the funds should go to independent community schools which are successful.

Other strategists feel they have an immediate responsibility to changing the public schools where the vast majority of low income students remain. Also prompted by the potential of securing public funding, these people advocate the establishment of independent sub-systems which may attain the strength necessary to negotiate a return to the public system. Hopefully these negotiations would alter the whole community's public schools and maintain a substantial degree of community responsiveness within the formerly independent sub-system.

This latter strategy would pivot on establishing an atmosphere in which the public system feels it must negotiate. A barrage of publicity pointing out the superiority of the sub-system's schools over public schools in that community would establish a base for the campaign. If this superiority were accomplished with approximately the same amount of funds per pupil as are expended in the public schools, the impact would be even greater. An effort would also be made to convince others that the community sub-system includes non-monetary resources (especially the resource of community support) which couldn't be independently created by the public system acting alone.

Secondly, the sub-system would work to secure funds that would ordinarily be reserved for the public schools. For example, the sub-system qualifies for its share of

Title I money according to the percentage of low income students it enrolls. Other federal programs have similar provisions, and laws providing for public support of non-public schools are now being considered in a number of state legislatures. Perhaps most effective would be an intensive campaign on the state level to secure all of that community's state school aid funds for the support of the (more effective) sub-system. Though the effort may be unsuccessful, the public system's attention and concern would surely be arroused.

SCHOOLS—AND MORE SCHOOLS

The evolution and present status of independent community schools is closely linked with the general condition of public education in each of the four cities in which the schools are located. Frustrations or conflicts with the public system often gives these schools their continuing impetus. Therefore they will be described in city groupings beginning with the city with the longest established school and moving to cities with more recent efforts:

New York
- East Harlem Block Schools (1965)
- Children's Community Workshop (1968)

Boston
- The Federation (1970)
- Roxbury Community School (1966)
- The New School for Children (1966)
- The Highland Park Free School (1968)

San Francisco
- The Martin Luther King Jr. School (1967)
- The Malcolm X School (1968)

Milwaukee
- The Federation of Independent Community Schools (1969)
- Boniface Community School (1969)
- Bruce-Guadelupe Community School (1969)
- Francis Community School (1969)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Community School (1969)

To limit the list to these schools is difficult. New community schools are being created each year. Judgments were made in limiting the above list to schools with a) substantial members of low income, minority group students, b) little or no required tuition payment, c) grades beyond the preschool level and d) a substantial amount of power directly in the hands of the parents. Another whole study could explore the many pre-school programs which are parent-controlled. Independent Head-start programs such as some of those established as part of the Child Development Group of Mississippi are examples of parent control.

Schools which probably fit the above definitions but haven't yet been fully explored by the author include the Albany Georgia Nursery (and Community) School, the Lorillard School and the Discovery Room for Children in New York City, the West Philadelphia Free School and a number of schools in Milwaukee which have not yet joined the Federation. There are undoubtedly others, not counting the many middle class parent-controlled or communal free schools.

As ever-increasing proliferation of schools can be expected now that a number of models are firmly established. The parent-founders of the first few community schools had to face the awesome questions: Can we begin a school which can't depend on the riches of middle class tuition payers? Now parents dissatisfied with inner city public schools know that the answer can be YES!

NEW YORK CITY

A centralized Board of Education with control over the education of more than a million students can't avoid producing much alienation among teachers, parents and community residents. An average person with a good idea for improving schools usually knows not to attempt an experiment, develop a model or even make a suggestion within the New York City public system. Too much bureaucracy! The proliferation of private schools is a testimony to this reality. The frustrations of those working in the three community Demonstration Districts is further proof.

The East Harlem Block Schools and Children's Community Workshop School value their independence from the bureaucratic public school monster but desire public funds to guarantee their continued operation. Children's Community has filed a state suit to secure public funds. The Block Schools look to a broad-based demand by parents in newly evolving parent-controlled day care programs. The sharp, incisive attacks of Dorothy Pittman and parents of the West 80th Street Center are just a hint of what is soon to come.

So many parent groups interested in establishing parent-run pre-schools have formed (estimated at nearly one hundred) in New York City that the Carnegie Corporation has given Bank Street College a grant of 150,000 dollars to provide technical assistance to these groups so that they can secure funding. The technical assistance team consists of a lawyer, architect, teacher trainer and the former Director of East Harlem Block Schools. Some people feel that the development of many pre-school programs in which parents set high standards for the education of their children is the most promising path to creating community-responsive schools in New York City. Once organized to run pre-schools, the parents are unlikely to be satisfied with the present public school system. They may become either a broad-based force for changing public schools or a powerful lobby for public funding of independent community schools through direct support or through a parent voucher system.

EAST HARLEM BLOCK SCHOOLS

Parents are clearly the crucial element in the East Harlem Block Schools. Although visitors are also impressed by the competent professional staff, the *parents* founded the schools hired all staff and are always present in the schools—as volunteers, visitors, staff, etc. Located in a predominantly Puerto Rican area of East Harlem, the two preschools and one elementary school enroll approximately 150 Puerto Ricans, blacks, and Italians.

EXTENSIVE PARENT INVOLVEMENT

A core of parents at the Block Schools are fully aware that the three schools wouldn't exist without their work and initiative. All parents have ready access to all phases of the Schools' operations—a sharp contrast to New York City Public Schools. They may choose their level of involvement: 1) merely gathering information about

the school and their child in regular monthly class meetings (attended by about half the parents each month) or through the frequent visits and phone contacts of the teachers; 2) taking on responsibility as an assistant teacher or parent coordinator or as a volunteer in fund raising, classrooms, or painting and maintenance; 3) becoming policymakers on the parent Board of Directors or the three Schools' personnel committees; or 4) acting as advocates of the Schools and their philosophy with local and national groups.

It is fascinating to find a high degree of decentralization of power within a complex of schools with a total enrollment of one hundred fifty. A sixteen-member Board of Directors (all parents) sets general policy, hires a general program director and directors for each of the three schools. Personnel committees in each school interview and hire all teachers and other staff from among those candidates recruited and screened by each school director. Although the bylaws provide for election of Board members by the parents of each classroom, in actuality most committee and Board members are selected by a volunteer and consensus process. If more than one person wishes to serve, the Board is enlarged.

Both the Board and personnel committees retain full power to fire staff. Many parents have first discovered through this committee work that they instinctively know much about what makes a good teacher for their child. Other more experienced parents help them put their concerns into words and questions. Professional teachers interviewed by these committees frequently report that the parents' questions are much more probing and perceptive than those of professional educators.

Volunteering for a personnel committee is frequently the first step to more extensive involvement. After parents gain self-confidence in a group and learn more about the school and education, they often wish to spread their ideas to others. A list of parents acting as *advocates* for the Block Schools is extensive:[1]

> ...a parent coordinator to speak at Bank Street College; a Board member to attend the conference of the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies; several parents to attend the U.S. Office of Education's Follow Through planning conference in Washington; several parents to negotiate with the Division of Day Care; two parents to meet with the Carnegie Foundation; parents to visit other schools; parents to join the City-wide Committee for Day Care; Board members to meet with the Human Resources Administration; representatives to attend the Community Council on Poverty meetings; several parents hired by the U.S. Office of Education as consultants to community-controlled programs in Colorado and Arizona; the list goes on and on.

HISTORY

For a group of low income parents in East Harlem the hope of creating their own school was almost unthinkable—until 1965. Then some parents, mostly Spanish-speaking, from two blocks in East Harlem learned that the Anti-Poverty Program had funds which could be used to start their own nursery school. After some lengthy discussions about their desires for such a school and employment of an interim director, the parents asked Tony Ward to become Director of the school. A resident of the block, Mr. Ward had moved to East Harlem and set up a tutorial project after completing college.

[1] Included in "Phillosophy" by Dorothy Stoneman. (Director, East Harlem Block Schools), New York: 1970, p. 4.

Unwilling to send their children to inadequate neighborhood public schools, in 1967 some of the parents agreed to open an elementary school as well. Located in a storefront and church, the elementary school has expandad a grade each year and in 1970-71 is due to extend through the fourth grade.

CURRICULUM

The Schools' founding parents did not begin with a specific educational philosophy. They knew that they wanted the best possible staff and teachers; they wanted their children to learn actively, to enjoy school, and to be treated with warmth and respect. The current open classroom philosophy has evolved through experimenting with alternatives and a dialogue with their professional staff. The Parent Board once hired a Montessori teacher and later two teachers who conducted a Summerhill style classroom. The first was rejected as too structured; the latter as too unstructured.

Most classrooms are now a mix of concern for individual learning and social development, using some of the materials and techniques of the British Infant Schools and Schools for the Future. Teachers are concerned with providing children a choice among a variety of activities and alternative paths to acquire necessary skills. Written and verbal reports about a child's strengths, needs and progress replace formal grades. For the elementary school students, a highlight of the year is the week spent living on a farm. Many field trips (averaging more than one a week for each child) throughout the year extend this effort to learn from the environment. Although less stress has been put on Puerto Rican culture or history than might be expected, the Spanish-speaking assistant teachers are always present to support children who haven't yet learned English.

STAFF

The Board has selected a young administrative and teaching staff. Almost all are in their twenties. The Board dismisses staff which fail to meet their high standards. Teachers have been dismissed despite support for them from the Director. Believing in continuing staff accountability, the Board does not grant tenure to any of its staff. Although there is moderate staff turnover, continuity has always been provided by those who remain. The parents who are assistant teachers and parent coordinators also tend to remain with the Schools for a number of years. These paid full-time assistants work as full partners to the certified teachers, carrying out similar teaching functions. Teachers and assistants meet daily to plan the next day's schedule and exchange observations about the children.

Block Schools' teachers with prior experience in public schools often speak of a completely different feeling toward parents. Their respect for parents begins with the first interview in which parents decide whether they'll have a job. It is continually reinforced through the partnership on staff and supportive parent meetings and activities.

PARENT BOARD

The Parent Board of Directors is generally content to delegate administrative and curricular matters to the staff. The Board determines long range plans and policy. It regularly reviews proposals and budgets drawn up by the staff. It constantly evaluates and monitors the Schools' operation.

The Board usually operates in a quiet, friendly and deliberate manner. There have never been controversies which divided the Puerto Rican, black and Italian par-

ents along racial lines (though the Puerto Ricans, a majority in the neighborhood, clearly have the major share in controlling the Schoolls). Cooperation among parents has grown over the five years as they have spent time together in school and social activities.

The Board admits neighborhood children to the Schools on a first-come, first-served basis (except that first preference goes to siblings of those presently enrolled). City Day Care regulations place limits on the family income of pre-schoolers, who pay a small tuition on a sliding scale. The token tuition for elementary school children (two dollars a week) is often left uncollected.

FUNDING

The two pre-schools operated on OEO Community Action Program grants until 1968. Then the Block Schools negotiated with the New York City Division of Day Care for continued support. Though the parents agreed to accept Day Care funding, they are in a continuous state of negotiation because the Division of Day Care is not accustomed to dealing directly with the concerns of parents in control of a school. Specifically, the parents objected to the arbitrary assignment of two caseworkers who were insensitive, patronizing and didn't speak Spanish. Though the parents succeeded in having acceptable caseworkers assigned, they are still tied to eligibility requirements which require offensive interviews regarding financial status of families. The personal nature of case records kept in public files is a similar concern. The parents also feel that not all parents should be forced to work in order to qualify for the Schools' services. They feel that there is greater value in their 10 hour-a-day pre-schools than merely babysitting service. The Schools find that inadequate funding and traditional day care guidelines obstruct innovation as well as the achievement of the Parent Board's basic educational and community development goals.

The elementary school is funded by a variety of small foundation grants, contributions from individuals, and a Follow Through grant. An advisory board of well-to-do New Yorkers helps secure some funds. Mailings to a list of regular donors usually raises about 8000 dollars a year. These sources allow much greater flexibility of operation than in the two publicly funded day care centers. The Director contrasts the smooth very successful operation of the elementary school with the struggle to maintain high morale in the day care centers. Rarely is there enough money in the elementary school's account to meet more than the current payroll. Dedicated staff members have frequently continued to work without pay—on faith that the money will be raised.

CHANGING PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

The Block Schools' pressure on the Division of Day Care has helped alter the interpretation of some guidelines as well as the Division's attitude toward funding of other parent-controlled day care groups. Appointed to the Board of Directors of the New York City Day Care Council, the Borough President's Advisory Committee on Day Care, the Board of Directors of the Day Care Assistance Fund and the Mayor's Task Force for Early Childhood Development, representatives of the Block Schools put many hours of work into developing alternatives to present policies and programs.

The Block Schools have proven to be a training ground for parents and staff to gain the skills necessary to change other public institutions. In addition to their activities in day care, some parents have increased their activity with local public school

parents associations attended by their older children, and two parents ran for the local school board in District 4.

The Parent Board has set an internal goal of extending the elementary school to the eighth grade. Meanwhile as the pioneer in their field they are responsive to other parent groups wishing help in establishing independent community schools.

THE CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SCHOOL

The Children's Community Workshop has been designed to be an integrated, alternative model for the New York City public schools. Reflecting the wide disparities of income and racial variety on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, the Workshop began in the fall of 1968 with an enrollment of 75 chilldren: one-third Spanish-speaking, one-third black and one-third white. Children are enrolled on a first-come first-served basis within these categories and no child is charged tuition. Located in a parent-renovated, city-owned brownstone house scheduled for demolition and the basement of another brownstone, the four classrooms enroll children aged 5 to 12.

In contrast to the East Harlem Block Schools where an educational philosophy emerged over a period of years, the Community Workshop was founded with—and largely because of—a strong commitment to a single educational philosophy. The six parent founders of the Workshop believed in a very free version of the British Infant School approach. In order to assure some continuity in implementing this philosophy, these six parents remain members of the present Governing Board. The Board also includes three staff members and seven other parents elected by the parent body as a whole.

As the School's name suggests, the Workshop curriculum is *child-centered,* utilizing classroom and community resources to stimulate children. A child at the Workshop may choose almost any activity. He also may choose to tune-out for a day—or a week—at a time without being pressured to produce. The free and lively classrooms are more similar to the free schools being established in white communities and communes than classrooms in any of the other community schools. However, the Workshop distinguishes itself from the free schools through its culturally diverse student body. The children are free to discover the cultures and behavior of other students without feeling that the school staff imposes traditional white middle class values on them. Emotional and social growth of the children is felt to be at least as important as intellectual development.

Each home classroom spans two or three age levels with frequent interchange between classrooms of children with greater difference in age. Utilizing a variety of materials to develop creativity, teachers help children with many individual projects in art, woodworking and crafts. Students have built radios, developed pottery skills,, dissected animals, made a fresco, done work with microscopes, etc. Reading is taught largely through child-written or dictated stories.

The Board has found itself most frequently grappling with the problem of fund-raising. Existing on a trickle of foundation grants and parent and personal donations, the School continuously faces the threat of insolvency. The parents have filed a legal suit against the State of New York to gain for the Workshop the per pupil tuition which ordinarily would be spent for their children if they had no choice but to continue attending the inadequate public schools.

BOSTON

The Boston Public Schools are known to many as "an archaic, highly political school system." Federal bureaucrats often prefer to avoid Boston completely rather than attempt to establish new programs within this resistant system. Massachusetts is the only state in the country in which the state legislature has created a completely separate school structure competing with the normal public school constituency. Though reluctantly supported by the Boston School Committee, the C.C.E.D. (see sketch in chapter III) is not only supported by state funds but it is directly accountable to the State Department of Education—by-passing the whole city school structure.

Some New Yorkers have suggested that greater accountability and community control can be accomplished by establishing an elected rather than appointed central board. The lesson of Boston seems to be the reverse—at least for black Roxbury. Politics in Boston means Irish, Italians, and Louise Day Hicks. Many Boston politicians see the School Committee as a stepping stone to the Mayorality and other political offices. Being at heart politicians instead of educators, many School Committee members have been more interested in developing a loyal patronage through school appointments than in creating a modern, effective school system.

With a black population of less than ten percent, black impact in elective politics is minimal. As long as Roxbury is a small fraction of a politically operated school system, their hope appears to remain in establishing independent schools and subsystems outside of the public system.

A FEDERATION OF THREE SCHOOLS

A Federation among the Roxbury Community School, the New School for Children and the Highland Park Free School is the first uncertain step taken by these three schools to create a sub-system in Roxbury. Motivations to create the Federation varied widely from the long-range goal of challenging the public schools from a broader power base to a more immediate need to pay bills. (The Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Family Fund suggested to the three schools that their chances of obtaining funds would be much greater if they federated in some way.) The "Statement of Intent and Process of Federation" agreed to by the three schools in the Spring of 1970 sets forth two major purposes: "improving the quality of teaching in our schools and making a greater impact on education in Boston."

The specific powers of the Federation are currently being discussed by a planning group consisting of equal representation from each school. Initially powers and functions will be quite limited—mostly to cooperative fund raising, purchasing, accounting, and perhaps staff workshops and supportive health and nutritional services. Those favoring a strong Federation feel that the extent of the powers will grow as schools reluctant to give up their independence recognize the benefits. For the 1970-71 school year an effort to replace individual school principals with a Federation administrator has been delayed. Those parents concerned with independence cite the need for a strong responsive leader in each school.

Federation policies will be set by a Board composed of equal representation from each school. A small staff is now working to carry out the joint Federation planning and fund raising. In addition to a 45,000 dollar grant from Rockefeller Family Fund to support Federation staff activities, the three member schools expect to share a large grant from the Ford Foundation matching local funds from Boston Permanent Charities and a newly affiliated group of Boston foundations.

56

ROXBURY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

> An alternative, tuition-free elementary school drawing together the energies of parents of the Roxbury-North Dorchester community in response to the intransigence of the Boston Public Schools in the face of impersonal, irrelevant education for poor children and systematically demeaning education for black children—and in answer to the Boston School Committee's refusal to grant parents control of the education of their children. . . .[2]

This introduction to the Roxbury Community School properly places stress on its contrast with the normally rigid, and traditional public school of Boston. The lively enthusiasm of excited children and parents is evident throughout their newly renovated three story tenement building-schoolhouse. Although parents were clearly disgusted with lack of academic progress by their children when in the public schools, they are even more concerned about the physical and emotional abuse which must be absorbed daily by black and poor public school students. The individualized, Leicestershire style curriculum of the Community School has evolved from this concern.

DEVELOPMENT

The School was first organized by a small group of disaffected parents in the Leyland Street area of Boston. Meeting first in 1965 with pre-school age children in a living room, the School has added a grade a year through the 1969-70 school year when they served nearly one hundred children from kindergarten through the fourth grade. Although some early assistance came from the neighborhood Episcopal Church, a few university educators and some wealthy suburbanites, the Community School has largely been a product of the work and dreams of neighborhood parents, most of whom are low income blacks. The parents are proud of the initiative they have taken and are understandably reluctant to compromise their autonomy or accept outside help. Only after thorough investigation did they accept a much-needed Follow Through grant beginning in 1968. The current movement toward a Federation with Highland Park Free School and the New School for Children is also being carefully weighed and discussed before the ties become stronger.

Although a 20 member Board which includes 17 parents is elected each year, most large policy decisions are made at monthly Board meetings at which all parents may speak and vote. Parents are required to attend at least every third Board meeting so that they will continue to feel a part of the governing of the school. They are also expected to attend regular conferences about their child's progress. The Roxbury Community School Board believes that "parents can have a real part in their children's education only if they have a knowledge of what happens in the school, and a conviction that their role in making it happen is essential."[3]

Children from the immediate Leyland Street neighborhood are admitted to the school first. Recently the school has added some Spanish-speaking children who are now moving into the neighborhood. Special efforts are being made to meet the individual needs of these recent immigrants.

PROGRAMS

The classrooms each have a certified teacher and teaching intern (parents) who

[2] "What's All This About? What's Roxbury Community School", a pamphlet distributed by the school, p. 1.

[3] From Roxbury Community School newsletter, May, 1970, as reported in letter to the author from Doreen Wilkinson, Director of the School.

work together as a team, sharing teaching responsibilities. The certified teachers are generally young. The teaching interns are enrolled in a degree-granting teacher training program at Northeastern University in which the Community School provides the classroom experience and supervision. The teaching interns participated in all phases of the Northeastern program, from the meetings that produced the proposal to evaluations of the individual classes as they are given.

Similar intensive participation by parents pervades many aspects of the school. For Example:

> When a series of evening classes were set up in the school, parents and community people first met to decide what they wanted. When a grant was solicited from O.E.O., parents literally "holed up" in the school over a weekend. With the help of the man from Washington, these parents, whose expertise was a knowledge of and concern for their community, wrote the proposal for Follow Through (an extension of Headstart). They designed medical and social services, a hot lunch program, listed special equipment for teaching reading, math, social studies, ets., wrote in a health aid, a community organizer, and a cook-dietician.[4]

The yearly expansion and 120,000 dollar renovation of a tenement (for classrooms, office, library, health room, parent room, cafeteria and kitchen) has placed a great financial burden on the Community School. Although some additional support will come through the Federation, insufficient funding remains the number one aggravation for the school.

THE NEW SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

Located in the heart of Boston's black community, the New School for children describes itself as an "independent, family-oriented elementary school."

HISTORY AND TRANSITION

Now a complete kindergarten to sixth grade elementary school, The New School began four years ago as a kindergarten:[5]

> In September 1966, a small group of black families concerned with the welfare of their children within the Boston School System began kindergarten classes in the basement of a church in lower Roxbury. In three months, with the financial support and guidance from local, suburban, and educational communities, these families rented and renovated a building, added four grades, hired a staff, and opened its doors to 75 young people.

As proven by its past adaptability to build on strengths, The New School stands ready to change to meet parent and student needs and criticisms. Assured by the parent-controlled structure, this responsiveness contrasts deeply with the practices of the Boston Public Schools. After operating for two years with a moderate tuition and a Board of Trustees, the New School parents decided early in 1969 to make some changes which build on the two strong roots of their history: first, that of a parent-initiated, parent-involved school, serving the Roxbury community; and secondly, a child and family-centered school trying a variety of new ideas in education.

---

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] "The New School for Children," a brochure published by The New School, 1969.

In 1970, control will be shifted from the Board of Trustees (which in the past has included sizeable university representation along with elected parents) to the parent body as a whole. Tuition charges have been eliminated. Although the school includes students of varying racial and class backgrounds, it has decided that admissions priority will be given to local residents living in the immediate vicinity of their newly acquired school building (formerly a Hebrew school). The student body is presently about 80 percent black and 50 percent from low income families.[6]

An interesting structure and procedure has been devised to facilitate control by such a large body (enrollment is now 130). The parents elect four officers and form committees which are responsible back to the full group.[7] Each committee and each of the three "learning units" (classroom level groups) send one representative to form an Executive Committee sitting with the four officers and two students elected by the fifth and sixth graders. Long-term policy, hiring and major fiscal decisions lie with the whole parent body. The executive committee receives reports from the committees; its reports in turn are to be considered by the parent body at meetings to be held at least every six weeks. (This design to assure a maximum of democratic participation by all parents and avoid ruling cliques will be interesting to follow in practice.)[8]

CURRICULUM

Characterizing their educational philosophy as a "child-centered developmental approach," the New School plans to have a totally non-graded system by 1972.[9] The School is divided into three "learning units" which utilize the community as a laboratory for learning. They strive to relate the internal operation of the classroom environment to the larger complexities of the surrounding community. The primary unit includes three vertically grouped classrooms for children aged four to seven. It stresses individualized learning and natural peer groups. Designated the "transitional unit," the 3rd and 4th grade sections do some work traditionally expected of this grade level while exploring some freer activities and limited vertical grouping. The Core Curriculum for fifth and sixth graders is designed to train students to heighten their political awareness and help them clarify personal and social goals. An effort is made to develop individual talents of leadership and creativity through small groups and individual projects.[10]

At all levels the school curriculum attempts to accomplish dual functions: 1) teaching of basic reading, writing and computing skills "to compete effectively in the larger society" and 2) "humanize" the students so that they are able to "deal personally and socially with questions of identity, race relations, intergroup relations and the larger human issues which determine man's relationship with his fellowman."[11] In addition to the one certified teacher for approximately twenty children, most classrooms in each unit have a teacher intern (a parent who acts as an assistant or co-teacher). Specialists in art and other subjects are also called on. The stress on teaching of carpentry and Spanish is interesting in this mostly black school which teaches a good bit of black history and culture. With strong feeling that their educational philosophy is far superior to that of the public schools, the parents and School make a great effort

[6] Estimate based on OEO poverty scale. Interview with Parent Administrator, Ruth Irving, 4:30 P.M., December 8, 1969.
[7] The standing committees are admissions, personnel, educational policy, finance, rules, building and publicity.
[8] This plan is set forth in a carefully drafted statement by the School's Educational Policy Committee: "Statement on Educational Policy for the New School for Children," May 21, 1969. Hereafter called "Statement."
[9] "Statement" *op. cit.*, p. 1.
[10] "Statement" *op. cit.*, pp. 6-8.
[11] "Statement" *op. cit.*, p. 1-2.

to place graduates of the sixth grade into schools providing similar learning experiences. All of last year's graduates are attending schools outside of the Boston Public System.

In addition to providing training through Northeastern University, Boston University, and New Careers for its parent teacher interns, New School conducts periodic training sessions and orientation sessions for parents of all students at the beginning of each year.

An evaluation week is planned for the end of the year:[12]

> Both parents and teachers will be expected to work out the evaluation process. Exploration and self-examination are two important elements which should be looked for in evaluating the child's learning. Those conducting the evaluation must engage themselves directly in the child's activity. Questions must be raised among the participants in the evaluation about how the child learns, what the child should be learning and what tools should be made available to the pupils' learning environment.
>
> The child's sensitivity to learning materials and awareness of the larger environment, his teacher, his relations with peers, should be considered in the evaluation.

THE HIGHLAND PARK FREE SCHOOL

Concerned that they not isolate themselves from the masses of children who must attend Boston Public Schools, the independent Highland Park Free School has provided up to three positions on their Steering Committee for parents of children enrolled in the local public school. Some of the Free School parents and their farsighted former principal, Luther Seabrook, have been the strongest advocates of the newly formed Federation. Seabrook outspokenly advocated this Federation as a means to gain sufficient power to effect changes in the public schools of Boston.

STRUCTURED TO ACHIEVE BROAD PARTICIPATION/CONTROL

Resisting the temptation of becoming an exclusive school for the few middle income residents of Roxbury, the Free School has adopted a requirement that 75 percent of its students must be from families with incomes of less than one thousand dollars a year per member. Over eighty percent of its 185 students are black. Accepting students from the immediate neighborhood, the School charges no tuition.

Also concerned that the few middle income parents active in the school not control its policy, the parents have decided to require that seventy-five percent of the members of each Standing Committee meet the low income requirement (less than 1000 dollars per family member per year). The four Standing Committees recommend policy on finance, personnel, admissions and curriculum to the Steering Committee. The body of parents as a whole, designated the "Council", recruits members for the committees from among the parents. If more than the necessary seven are interested in serving on one committee, the seven members are determined by drawing lots. Wishing to assure continuing new ideas on these committees, the Council limits members to yearly terms renewable only once. At least fifty percent of each committee's positions must be vacated yearly to allow other parents to participate.

[12] "Statement" *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

The Council also selects three to five Free School parents to sit on the Steering Committee along with three community residents (with children in public schools), one representative of each Standing Committee, one parent selected by parents with children in each of the six classroom units, plus two students elected at large. The Steering Committee determines major policy for the School. The parents in each classroom unit meet at least four times yearly with staff to discuss progress and plans.

Parent committees also did much of the early planning of the school. Parents investigated a number of other model schools, including other community schools. A pre-school, already operated in the School's present building, was absorbed into the Free School.

INDIVIDUALIZED CURRICULUM

In addition to striving to be democratically run, the Free School simultaneously designates itself an "experimental urban school".[13] Having been initiated by a few staff members at the Educational Development Corporation (EDC) in Cambridge jointly meeting with parents in a Roxbury community center, the Free School has had the assistance of educational innovators from its birth. Although EDC is best known for its clever science, social studies and new math materials, it has fostered a wide variety of other creative educational projects as well.

[13] Highland Park Free School, a mimeographed description prepared by the Director, December, 1969, p. 1.

The Free School is divided into non-graded classroom units encompassing pre-kindergarten to eighth grade in two year spans. It stresses an individualized curriculum which attempts to conform to both the speed and style of the child's learning. Some individualized programs boast that they allow children to proceed at their own pace; the Free School also attempts to match materials and subject matter to individual interests. Black history and culture is stressed throughout the School. Preliminary test results indicate that Free School students "achieve academically at rates significantly higher than comparable students in the public schools."[14]

STAFF: COMMUNITY-PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The classroom staffing pattern reflects the parent involvement of the whole school. Each classroom has a "community teacher" as well as the regular certified teacher. The School views the community teacher as the organizer of classroom and parents while the certified teacher is the technician providing skills to maintain a functioning classroom. The teachers are to plan together and implement their plans jointly. In practice, leadership in the classroom may be shared or taken on by either of the two; leadership here depends upon personality and leadership skills rather than the traditional definition of a professional. This contrasts with the normal teacher-to-aide relationship in most public schools. The process of "sensitizing" the certified teachers to parents and community is stressed in the Free School teaching team. Specifically, subconscious racist behavior among teachers is felt to be reduced by having two teachers of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds in classrooms.

Boston University provides the formal courses for a "career lattice," the plan devised by the Free School staff and parents. The "pre-professional" community teachers may achieve a B.S. degree with no more than sixty course credits as presently defined. However, each community teacher is considered individually and may receive more or less training according to past experience and needs.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

FUNDING

The Free School now receives support from Follow Through for its primary grade children. Although some funds are received from voluntary parent contributions, most remaining funds have been granted by a few small foundations, the Black United Front of Boston and Boston University. The former Principal refused to solicit funds from rich white suburbanites—a common practice in other independent community schools. The School is hopeful that sizeable grants promised to the three Federation schools will provide sufficient funds to avoid the previously recurrent funding crises.

SAN FRANCISCO

Often mentioned in the same breath with New York City as a "liberal", exciting city, San Francisco has public schools which are just as bitterly attacked by some in its black communities as those in New York. Until recently, San Francisco schools have taken few steps toward parent involvement and have been characterized by some as "the worst you could find anywhere".[15] The negative attitudes of white teachers toward blacks are bitterly criticized. Two independent schools have been born in low income black areas of San Francisco since 1967 as a result of conflict between parents and the public schools. Additional predominantly white schools have been established by parents of mixed income levels.

THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SCHOOL

An outspoken black elementary school teacher, Welvin Strowd was fired in 1967 by the San Francisco Public School System. An extremely effective leader, Strowd and his charisma led the parents of his students to withdraw their children when he was removed. This boycott led to the establishment of a summer school in 1967. When the conflict wasn't settled, the parents set up a year-round independent school directed by Mr. Strowd.

Also born of this conflict was the Hays Valley School Committee. Composed partially of parents of Strowd's students, the Committee has struggled with the dual task of attempting to change the public schools and operate the Martin Luther King., Jr. School. Any parent with children in the School were automatically members of the Committee. In turn the Committee appointed a Board of five parents to make day-to-day decisions in the MLK School. The departure of Mr. Strowd and a number of students and parents to found the Malcolm X School early in 1969 led to the closing of Martin Luther King later in the year.

THE MALCOLM X SCHOOL

Welvin Strowd was also the central figure in establishing the Malcolm X School in the Hunters Point area. A Board of three parents and two black community leaders incorporated the school early in 1969. This Board then added ten additional members from nominees submitted by parents or the original Board members. In 1970 they expect to hold elections for a new Board to be elected by the body of parents of the School's thirty children. The parents regularly attend monthly meetings (an average

[15] A new superintendent of schools in the past year may bring changes in this pattern. Exciting developments led by Principal Bob Jiminez of the Buena Vista Public School in the Mission District may be indicative of the change. A group of minority group school administrators has united to urge further changes.

attendance rate of 90 percent of families represented) at which general directions for the School are determined.

Enrolling children between ages 3 and 18, Malcolm X values its vertical exposure of children across age levels in a single classroom. Founders see this vertical grouping as furthering its experiential approach which stresses trips and writing about experiences. The School has published a collection of the writings of its 10 and 11 year olds, entitled *The James Brown Reader*. Classroom efforts to meld relevance with basic skills and concepts has been described as teaching the children "survival attitudes necessary in the United States." [38]

As with the Martin Luther King, Jr. School, inadequate funding has been a problem. The School depended upon volunteer staff and twenty dollars a month tuition from parents until it received a foundation grant in the Fall of 1970.

In 1970, the School has developed adult education classes in poetry reading, dance and Swahili. Recognizing a lack of learning opportunities in black culture for adults in the Bay area, Welvin Strowd feels this will also strengthen community and parent involvement.

MILWAUKEE

Federation of Independent Community Schools

An independent parent-controlled system of up to 9 community schools potentially enrolling almost 2,000 students is evolving in Milwaukee. By the Spring of 1970 four community schools with an enrollment of 788 were acting cooperatively in the Federation of Independent Community Schools.

Inner city parochial schools are closing in many cities across the country. If a transition to independent parent-controlled community schools continues to be successful in Milwaukee, their alternative to closing may set a valuable precedent for parents in other communities.

HISTORY

The provision of some lead time by a Milwaukee Archbishop allowed parents to make a response to the threat of closing schools. Archbishop Cousins announced in May of 1968 that ever-increasing costs of education forced him into a dilemma: the Archdiocese could not continue to meet these added costs indefinitely and yet he could not permit the schools to remain open at an inadequate level of funding. In the fall of 1968, parents in approximately a dozen inner-city parochial schools, determined not to send their children to public schools which they felt to be grossly inferior, organized the Parents for Educational Progress (P.E.P.). Primarily a response to the funding crisis, P.E.P. also began discussing their concerns for greater parent involvement and an improved quality of education.

All located in the Poverty Program's tarket area, the schools include one with predominantly Spanish-speaking enrollment, four with majority or wholly black, and a number with a white majority. By early 1970, the Spanish-speaking and three predominantly black schools had moved to become community schools and had formed a Federation which they anticipate will be necessary to their long-range survival. These schools incorporated themselves as independent schools, elected parent boards and suc-

[38] Interview with Julian Richardson, Chairman of the Malcolm X School Board, April, 1969.

cessfully negotiated the leasing of the former Parish school buildings for token sums. Not only has the Archdiocese committed itself to continue providing facilities to community schools which are successful in finding adequate operating funds, but also the Archbishop has contributed to each of the community schools the usual level of support for the 1969-70 school year. At first faced with a 40 to 60 percent cut, the parents confronted the Archbishop with a summary of their plans and accomplishments; he restored the full-funding level. Some feel that a significant degree of support from the Archdiocese will continue for at least the next few years. The conscience of the church must certainly feel great pressure from these "abandoned" inner-city schools.

THE FEDERATION

Approximately eight other schools have chosen to become community schools, have elected independent community school boards, and some are considering entering the Federation. Terms for entry include:

1) No racial, religious or ethnic discrimination (the schools' enrollments are already majority non-Catholic)
2) No formal teaching of religion
3) Must be incorporated
4) Must be developing an innovative program.

Representatives of the four Federation schools have met extensively and agreed upon five immediate joint objectives: 1) tapping the often-ignored community resources developed through parent and community responsibility, participation and power; 2) imparting "making-it" skills as rapidly as possible; 3) establishing two multi-cultural exchange resource centers; 4) developing a "new breed" of urban educators from among community residents; and 5) maximizing the variety in innovative curriculum models to be tried in Milwaukee. Their long range goals suggest a strategy for changing a whole city's educational system. By extending the Federation to other non-public schools, developing a number of convincing new curriculum models, and "cooperating" with public schools and teacher training institutions, they expect to influence considerably the course of public education in Milwaukee.

Despite the lack of full-time staff, the Federation has been able to mount some impressive joint activities by following its own objective of utilizing untapped parent and community resources. Strong ties with two local universities (Marquette and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) have also helped. Cooperative Federation activities include shared technical assistance, combined fund-raising, coordinated relationship with other local institutiins, information-sharing and joint parent learning experiences. The general level of cooperation has facilitated the development of the member schools, each with their own unique curriculum developed to suit neighborhood parents and children.

THE FOUR FEDERATION SCHOOLS

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Community School recently decided to join the Federation. Early actions were taken in large meetings of the Home and School Association. Given an option to have a loose private school association with the parish, the parents instead chose to break off completely by establishing an independent corporation and elected board. Early controversy centered on whether all of the Catholic Sisters who were teaching some classes should be replaced by lay teachers. Although M. L. King

decided to retain the Sisters and selected one of them to be Principal, at least one other Community School has replaced all Sisters (without loss of the Archdiocese contribution).

M. L. King's School Board includes nine parents elected in staggered three year terms. At the parents' insistence two staff members also sit on the Board. Most of the staff is strongly in favor of parent control. According to M. L. King's Principal, the staff attempted to convince the parents that they should interview the teachers to determine whether they should stay. The parents did dismiss one teacher last Spring. The break with the Parochial system has led the staff to initiate basic changes in curriculum: regular texts were set aside and increased parent conferences replaced report cards.

Initiative in the three original Federation Schools has come more from parents than in the King School. In all three, parents have selected an administrator to implement their plans. M. L. King has only been accepted conditionally into the Federation; the other schools want to be assured that parents at King continue to take on responsibility and control in the school.

Parent initiative in the Boniface Community School can be traced from their community's leadership and involvement in the civil rights movement during the 1960's. The parents and faculty have agreed to work toward a freer atmosphere in Boniface. They are moving toward "multi-age units," individualized instruction, more free choice activities, and use of junior high age students as tutors. The curriculum stresses "black history, self-expression and creativity in art, dance, music and communication skills." The parent-selected administrator is implementing this curriculum and plans for an extensive school-community service program.

The deteriorating neighborhood around Francis Community School produces great turn-over in the area schools. Many students have been transferred to Francis from the public schools. Francis has worked effectively with public school "disrupters" through a cooperative program developed with the State Mental Health Committee. The primary grades are vertically grouped across age levels; older children are free to pursue in-depth study at flexible interest centers in science, language arts, math, arts, and reading.

The Federation community school with a 73.4 percent Spanish-speaking enrollment has begun an intensive bi-lingual program. Encouraged by a Title VII grant shared with the public schools for a bilingual program in the first and second grades, Bruce-Guadalupe decided to expand its program to the upper grades utilizing its own resources. In each classroom, Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students are taught each others' language as well as their native tongue. Spanish-speakers who learn best in their native language are taught to read first in that language. Linguistic readers, records, and tapes for listening centers are used. Two bi-lingual community aides do much of the teaching in the first two grades.

Spanish-speaking and English-speaking parents are able to "converge" together at parent meetings through the use of a "unique system of instant translation." Bruce Guadalupe is planning a bilingual Latin American Cultural Resource Center for the development and utilization of instructional materials stressing the heritage of the community.[17]

[17] A longer description of the individual schools can be found in "A Proposed Multi-Ethnic Approach to Urban Education" The Federation of Independent Community Schools, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (March, 1970) pp. 12-15.

FUNDING

Former church funding patterns and new possibilities created by independent community status combine to form interesting prospects for funding at an adequate level. Pressure on the Christian conscience of the church make continued Archdiocese and Parish support likely. As in many parochial schools, the parents and staff have developed by necessity an adeptness at local fund raising through benefits, bazaars, special sales, etc. (Bruce-Guadalupe Community School recently raised 2000 dollars selling chocolate bars.) Parochial schools also are adept at recruiting volunteers to fulfill many school needs from tutoring to school upkeep. Such resourcefulness has allowed the schools to operate with less than 400 dollars per student *cash* input. Although yearly tuition of up to 100 dollars for a child (usually on a diminishing scale for large families) has provided funds in the past, most schools are not enforcing its collection and others are abolishing it. Instead, voluntary parent contributions are being sought.

The schools continue to receive portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I, II, VI and EPDA funds or services as provided for by federal law. Member schools also receive some funds or services from the Adult Basic Education (H.E.W.) and New Careers (Department of Labor) Programs. A state aid formula for non-public schools is being considered by the state legislature. A concerned lobbying effort aided by the Catholic Church forces could carve out special state funds for a sub-system.

The development of a Federation with a complement of between four and nine schools is considered by some to be critical in securing new sources of funding to replace lost tuition and diminished or leveling off church support. The Federation Funding Committee (which includes some participation of potential as well as present Federation Schools) is exploring the prospects for funds from local and national foundations; they are preparing Headstart and Follow-Through proposals. The Federation also is considering strategies for a coordinated approach to Milwaukee area businesses (there is no functioning Urban Coalition to work through in Milwaukee).

In December, 1969, the local Community Action Agency (CAA) jointly developed with the Federation a 154,000 dollar proposal that was submitted to CAP Demonstration office of national OEO.[18] Although presented as a research proposal, the project proposes a sizeable staff which will provide direct services to the community schools. The staff would include five community organizers, an education planner, a social planner, as well as administrators who could assist with coordination, accounting and funding efforts. Perhaps most exciting is the plan to provide multi-service center resources at each of the participating schools to meet the multiple social, economic and educational needs of the parents and immediate school community. The CAA and its sponsored Neighborhood Service Center System would provide the resources while the schools with their close-knit parent groups would be the vehicle for delivery. The whole project would be controlled by the Federation Board composed of 3 elected delegates from each community school.

[18] A grant of 100,000 dollars was made by O.E.O.

CHAPTER V

MINORITY CONTROLLED STATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Due to a combination of chance and design a handful of local public school districts within states are controlled by a low income minority group population.

Although most concentrations of racial and ethnic minorities occur within large cities where a centralized board of education dilutes or negates the political impact of minorities, there are a few exceptions. Blockbusting and real estate promotion directed toward the black inner-city population helped to create the two predominantly black Long Island school districts of Wyandanch and Roosevelt.[1] Racial and economic exclusion are largely accountable for the creation of the two predominantly black working class suburbs described in this chapter (Inkster, Michigan, and East Palo Alto, California). A few other districts have emerged in predominantly black areas of the South.

Another district described is the result of the growth of an inner city Mexican-American ghetto in San Antonio, Texas. San Antonio never consolidated its city schools into one unified school district. It was almost inevitable that out of nine districts within the city boundaries, one would have a majority of Mexican-Americans.

Though each local district has an elected board empowered by the state to control the school system within the boundaries of state law, the extent of broad community involvement and ferment around schools varies greatly. In Inkster the main initiative came from a farsighted superintendent. In San Antonio an effort has been made by a single Mexican-American board member who was exposed to community control through travelling for his job with the Justice Department and meeting with other minority group members of the National Association of School Boards.

An aroused core of citizens in East Palo Alto has rallied around some activists, including a member of the Board of Education. They have developed a dual strategy of building an alternative school structure, independent of the public school system, at the same time they pressure the public schools to change.

Attempts to create completely new state school districts in Harlem and Watts have failed thus far. Unlike most sub-systems described in chapter III, these districts would only be responsible to the state. Harlem CORE has failed in two attempts to have the New York State Legislature carve a Harlem district out of New York City. Recent reports indicate that a new state district may be created in an area of Montana populated mostly by American Indians.

Other minority controlled state school districts exist in various sections of the country. Rather than being an exhaustive study of all such districts, this chapter presents typical problems and actions faced in three districts.

INKSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT — INKSTER, MICHIGAN

The racial exclusionist policy of all-white Dearborn, Michigan, is well known. Less publicized is its effect on the adjacent community of Inkster and the Inkster School District (which encloses a slightly different area than the city of Inkster).

PROGRAMS LIMITED BY STATE FUNDING STRUCTURE

Both Inkster and Dearborn are Detroit suburbs with largely working class residents. However, Inkster lacks the tremendous automobile plants which provide millions of property tax dollars to exclusive Dearborn. The Inkster School District is eighty percent black, mostly residing in homes valued from eight to twelve thousand dollars.

[1] Although not described here, these two districts suffer from the same economic problems as Inkster, Edgewood and Ravenswood School Districts. See "State Is Urged to Change Two Long Island School Districts to Solve Severe Racial and Budget Problems" *The New York Times,* December 28, 1969, p. 41.

The District levies one of the highest tax rates (which also is based on an extremely high rate of evaluation) in the state of Michigan. Nevertheless, Inkster has been unable to open a new Junior High School completed in 1968 with funds from a special two million dollar bond issue because of its low property tax base. It does not raise sufficient funds for it to be staffed and maintained. Meanwhile, the overcrowded conditions in the system's one junior high school and six elementary schools become more critical.

In 1969, the District joined with Detroit in a legal suit seeking a redistribution of state funds so that each Michigan school district would receive support according to need, or at a minimum, as much money per pupil as in richer communities with higher tax bases. As measured in dollars and the choices that sufficient funds allow, local power and control is still lacking despite the locally elected School Board in Inkster. Most Board decisions are determined by financial crises rather than by choosing among major alternative paths of action.

Despite the shortage of local funds the Superintendent has been able to develop an elaborate kindergarten program through a Title III, E.S.E.A. grant. Stressing language development through language labs and small classes, the quality of the program has attracted a twenty percent white enrollment for this centralized, "integrated" program. At upper grade levels, most white children are sent to parochial schools.

COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEES

As in most school districts, community participation occurs primarily through contacting friends who are members of the School Board and by ad hoc citizen pressure groups. In an effort to broaden direct community involvement in schools beyond the elected Board of seven, a former Superintendent instituted a system of special review committees. Including community residents, representatives of parents associations, teachers, and Board members, the committees review candidates for major administrative positions and make recommendations on major new programs or construction. Their findings are presented to the Superintendent and Board for final action. The present Superintendent was selected through this procedure.

More radical steps toward broad based community control are unlikely to occur soon in Inkster due to a very strong teachers union (predominantly black) and a black superintendent who stresses the importance of the professional in decision-making.

EDGEWOOD DISTRICT — SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Unlike most cities, San Antonio has never consolidates its smaller school districts. Among the nine "autonomous" state districts in the city, Mexican Americans control one (Edgewood) and have a significant minority voice in two others. Since Texas retains strong controls at the state level, these districts exercise limited control in a way somewhat similar to the sub-systems within city-wide systems that relinquish limited powers.

Efforts for broader community involvement in Edgewood were led until recently by Board member Gilbert Pompa. He had proposed that a local community pressure group supported partly through a Ford Foundation grant, the Concerned Parents, help interview candidates for Superintendent. Pompa also urged adoption of curriculum to promote "brown awareness" in the 90 percent Mexican-American district. He wanted

to add more Mexican-American teachers than the meager 23 percent now employed by the district. General concern about low student achievement and high rate of turnover among a sub-standard staff had moved him to act.

Pompa's work with the Justice Department's Community Relations Service provides him many opportunities for contact with activists and educational innovators across the country. However, he was transferred to Washington, D.C. in 1969, to take advantage of his obvious knowledge and ability. He also helped initiate pressure for change from among Mexican-American delegates at recent meetings of the National Association of School Boards and the National Conference for Spanish-Surnamed Schoolboard Members. Remaining Board members in Edgewood did not seem to have the mobility or the desire for change that motivated Pompa. However, change may be in the wind as three new members, all in their 20's, were elected to the Board in April 1970.

The District doesn't have the funds to implement most desired improvements. Suffering from a tax base even lower than in Inkster, Edgewood parents have entered a suit against the District and the State for failing to provide equal education for their children. Because of the clear inequity of funds and the State's strong role and responsibility in local education, attorneys in some of the sixteen other similar suits across the country have expressed hopes that Edgewood would be adjudicated first.

Mexican-Americans first gained majority control of another San Antonio school district board in 1963. Since then, however, racially slanted electioneering in the "Anglo" (white) community has led to participation of ten times as many voters in the most recent election. As is often the case in such city districts, Anglos make up an absolute majority of the voters even though their children compose much less than half of the public school population. The Board now has an Anglo majority elected in the Spring of 1969 for a two year term.

EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA

A great deal of ferment in the East Palo Alto community has led to adoption of a dual strategy for change. Activists have attempted to gain majority control of the public school Board of Education at the same time they develop a structure for an independent school structure.

RAVENSWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Twelve schools with a combined enrollment of 5600 kindergarten to eighth grade students compose the Ravenswood Elementary School District in East Palo Alto. A suburb of San Francisco located in the county with California's highest per capita income, East Palo Alto is a "sophisticated colony" (according to Ravenswood's Superintendent) of working class black residents. They live in homes with average value in the seven or eight thousand dollar range. Across the freeway in the white suburbs of Palo Alto and Menlo Park homes valued in the 100,000 dollar range are common.

A five member Board of Education elected in non-partisan, community-wide elections controls elementary school policy in the Ravenswood District. Although a majority of the Board is black, an effort was made in the Spring of 1969 to replace two of the three remaining "moderates" on the board. Let by Board member Bob Hoover, the effort to elect additional "militants" fell short. However, continued pressure has been brought on the schools for change. Hoover would admit that improvement has occurred

but is disturbed by the slow pace of the change. The black Superintendent, John Minor, was chosen after a national recruitment campaign attracted 76 candidates. Minor must carefully work for moderate change so he doesn't lose the support of the Board majority.

The issues of low achievement (particularly reading scores), high teacher turnover, low quality of staff and the debate about who speaks for the community are the focus for activist groups (Mothers for Equal Education and Citizens for Equal Education). Community groups have pressured the principals to evaluate teachers and make them accountable for their performance. Although the teachers may request hearings to review any cases calling for their dismissal, no strong teacher group exists in the school system. Recognizing the need for an adequate supply of recruits in order to raise standards, activists have pushed the school system to mount a broader teacher recruitment drive in the South and East. Southern blacks are sought to counter the high proportion of white teachers (about 70 percent) in a system with a predominantly black student enrollment.

A citizens committee also studied possible remedies to the reading achievement problem. As a result, the Board adopted a pilot program using Project Read, a crash summer program, and enlisted the aid of over 300 volunteers who daily assist in classrooms. Other advisory groups drawn primarily from inside the system have proposed a greater stress on cultural history, workshops on teacher attitudes, and plans for getting more funds for school programs.

Much of the community ferment around Ravenswood schools arises from the fact that the District is the largest single employer in the community. Although most of the 265 teachers live out of the District, almost all of the 300 non-professional employees are from the area. In addition to the normal contingent of maintenance workers, cafeteria employees and classroom assistants, Ravenswood has hired some of its outspoken critics as school-community counselors.

THE DAY SCHOOL

One of the school-community counselors, Gertrude Wilks, has provided much of the leadership, along with Bob Hoover, in the establishment of an independent Day School. Although the School is presently limited to a Saturday tutorial program involving about 250 students, the leaders envision the construction and operation of a full-time school "in a year or so".[2] Hoover feels that "the public schools can't change quickly enough" even though he is generally complimentary of the direction in which Superintendent Minor is taking Ravenswood. Because of the problem of replacing and then training new personnel, Hoover feels that a realistic plan for changing the public system would require a ten year period.

The Day School was founded in 1966 as a vehicle for a boycott of the area high school. But when children from kindergarten to twelfth grade attended, they discovered the extent of the reading problem and decided to extend the School beyond the boycott. Now the fifteen member Board of community residents has land for school construction and is talking about raising half a million dollars for the building, as well as securing government grants to assist in its operation.

The School's Governing Board is composed mostly of its founders, many of whom are also pressuring the public schools through Mothers for Equal Education. The School's focus has been more on providing basic skills (particularly reading) and black cultural awareness to children than on involving parents.

[2] Interview with Robert Hoover, April, 1969.

Most of the school teaching "staff" consists of white volunteers from surrounding communities. The use of a number of adult volunteers in each classroom is a practice which recently has been adopted by the public schools. Hoover sees this generating and testing of new approaches as a significant continuing role of the Day School.

The Ravenswood District has provided the free use of a public school building. Also provided with volunteer staff, the Day School presently subsists with small local contributions for materials. No tuition is charged.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Ferment for change through participation also exists among East Palo Alto teenagers. In September, 1968, student demonstrations at Ravenswood High School (a black school in a larger white-dominated high school district) forced the resignation of the principal on the second day of school. Community and student pressures for an increase in the number of black staff and administration led the District Superintendent to name selection committees to interview and choose a new principal. The three separate committees composed of community residents, students, and teachers and administrators selected the same man.

By the Spring of 1969, the community and students wished to select teachers through a similar participatory system. The newly selected Principal disagreed, feeling he should retain this power.

Encouraging signs of change emerged in the 1969-70 school year: in contrast with the many previous disruptions, students took over and ran the entire school on Senior Administration Day; there were no major student disruptions; the extremely high teacher turnover has been reduced somewhat; and an active parents group has been developed.

CHAPTER VI
THE FUTURE:
THE SUPPORT AND SPREAD OF COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The encouraging early results of already established community school demands, at minimum, continued support of the present projects. Many parent and community groups are ready and anxious to create more community control projects. As is evident from the project descriptions, each project develops in a unique way. Development of more community schools is certain to mean great variety and innovation.

A MODEL: SMALL PARENT-CONTROLLED PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Examination of the preliminary results suggest one especially promising area for further development of community schools: small parent-controlled schools within the public system. These "micro-schools" would enroll fewer than two hundred children and would occupy decentralized facilities outside the normal school structure (or present school staffs and structures could be divided into a number of independently operated schools within a school). The staff and curriculum design would be determined by the parents working with skilled consultants, technicians and educators of their own choosing. The structure for parent involvement and decision-making would vary according to parent desires. Possible variations include an elected parent board, a committee of the whole including all interested parents, a variety of interlocking working committees, or a conscious delegation of authority to parent-selected professionals.

71

The potential advantages of small schools are clearly evident in the sketches of projects: more intensive parent involvement, much greater use of community resources, close parent-professional working relationships, and more innovative, relevant curricula. Probably most important, parents in small schools would be making decisions which directly affect their own and their children's lives. Large schools and districts require complex decisions. Parent representatives in such schools and districts must have the minds of skilled administrators (seemingly rare among professional educators, as well as the general public) to unravel the welfare of their children from among many alternatives; in addition, large, visible school committees and boards require and attract the skills—and wiles—of the politician-demagogue aspiring to greater personal visibility rather than quality education.

Establishing these small schools within the public system assures them a base of funds, the absence of which has plagued most small independent community schools. Economies of scale are usually cited as the major rationale for the continued construction of urban elementary schools enrolling between 1000 and 2500 students. Overlooked are the economies of flexibility and intimacy: elimination or great reduction of the need for costly relocation of families, inexpensive conversion of some current structures with minor renovation work, and reduction of vandalism through the "ownership" of small schools by the block or few blocks surrounding it. Teachers should welcome small schools. In addition to avoiding much of the administrative red tape of large schools, small schools controlled by the immediate community would provide competent teachers the personal support they need in a time when increased security guards are used as emergency measures in large schools. Many large schools are unworkable already; yet we don't admit it publicly.

Operating costs in small independent community schools have been comparable to nearby public systems. Increased salary scales in the public system would increase this cost somewhat. However, many teachers admit that their adamance about increased pay is partly a result of frustrations in the classroom: "If I can't get any more satisfaction out of teaching the kids in this impossible situation, I'll at least get enough pay to live very comfortably after 3 P.M." (In a system composed of small community schools the central school administration would become a facilitator, providing the resources, optional curricula, and classroom support now lacking for most teachers. Clusters of small schools would work together to provide more mutual support and the necessary cross fertilization of energy and ideas.) Although all our problems are certainly not solved by creating community schools, a structure is created in which many teachers and parents can work toward solutions. Our present large schools and centralized systems discourage most such initiatives—by parents *and* professionals.

There is clearly a danger which arises when the promising concepts of the independent community school are moved into the public system: lack of real control and independence. Present boards of education and professionals must be convinced that the improved results and pleasanter working conditions are to their benefit as well as the parents'.

Three funding possibilities which would preserve the independence of the microschools are evident. First, a parent voucher system would allow low income parents to send their child to and support a parent-controlled school. (Other competing alternatives would also be available to them.) Secondly, broadened state aid to non-public schools could provide the major support needed. Finally, the direct procedure of subcontracting for the operation of schools with incorporated groups of parents could be

accomplished with little or no change in current laws. (School districts presently subcontract with many firms and professional groups for a variety of services.)

Initially these small schools could be set up by parent groups which have already worked together to establish a pre-school, Model Cities project, or other effort. Newly formed parent groups could refer to the steps set forth by Anthony Ward in "Follow Through and Community Control." *

BROADER NEEDS

There are a number of theories about the expansion of community schools. One asserts that there is an irrepressible force growing at the grassroots level in minority group communities that will demand and obtain accountability and community control of many schools. This demand could also spread to dissatisfied white inner-city communities. In addition to taking over many schools by direct action, it is assumed that numerous independent schools will be established.

Many independent community school advocates point to a second possibility: broad funding of non-public schools through direct state aid or a voucher plan. Some see this being pressed by strong federations of independent schools, court cases, or a broad-based disgust with the present expenditure of public funds. In any case, low income parents would then have the funds necessary to set up alternative schools for their children, formerly a luxury enjoyed only by the upper middle class.

A third view foresees a gradual expansion of the number of community schools funded on a long-term experimental basis. Further expansion would come as a result of evaluations proving the superiority of the community schools.

Presently most community schools and projects operate with little communication to others. They lack the mobility, regular conferences and trade journals of professional educators. In June 1969 a conference of twenty-two community schools established the National Association of Community Schools. A year later, it still lacked funds to hire even a skeleton staff. Although Follow Through provides large grants to sponsors of the various curriculum approaches it has funded, until recently it provided no parallel support to a link among the parent-implemented programs. Preston Wilcox's Afram Associates received some funds in 1970 to carry out this function.

Clearly a coordinating link such as the National Association of Community Schools among all community schools could serve a number of critical functions in this period of struggle and expansion. It could:

1. Communicate new ideas and exchange descriptions of successful programs suited to community schools.
2. Assist new schools and parent groups.
3. Coordinate efforts to gain long term funding so that the schools can have the opportunity to be judged on their merit over time.
4. Develop new criteria for evaluations which include areas beyond the traditional measures of achievement.
5. Develop training programs which help parents and community residents deal with bureaucratic red tape and learn "the system".

The real strength of community control is in the local community. Any such coordinated functions clearly should be responsive to the control and needs of the local projects.

---

* Reprinted in Community, Queens College Institute for Community Studies, Vol . 1, No. 2, (January, 1969) pp. 2, 6.

Although the Nixon administration efforts to level off or reduce federal education expenditures may even further discourage minority group communities which already feel ignored, this may be the best time for a coordinated effort to gain broad support for community schools. Not only is the Republican ideology more supportive of the notions of local initiative and self-help, but also the Republican Party is less responsive to vested interests in the large cities which are generally controlled by the Democrats.

A momentum for the conversion of stifling, unweildy "public" schools to community schools is growing rapidly among community groups in urban areas. The commitment, potential funds, models and expertise are all there; in many areas additional community schools and learning centers are now being created.

A SUMMARY OF MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The community controlled school concept should be tried in a greater variety of community settings testing out varied choices of structures, curricula and strategies. An especially promising design to develop immediately is the "small parent-controlled public school" which would combine the clear strengths of the independent community schools with the assurance of a regular base of public funds. Warning: This should be attempted only in school systems which are truly open to parent control comparable to what occurs in independent schools.

2. Public school educators must stop being so protective of their monopoly. It only serves to limit severely the options of low-income families; the well-to-do already can choose a private school or move to a new community. If public systems are unwilling to create or tolerate real alternatives (through sub-contracting, for example), aid to non-public schools and parent voucher systems must be enacted on a broad scale. They would promote the development of more independent community schools and other promising educational forms in areas previously monopolized by the single public school system. Such laws or systems can be enacted with provisions assuring that funds are focused in areas and schools where there is real need.

3. Community control projects should be supported over an extended period of time before they are judged. They should not be allowed to fall prey to the "quick experiment" syndrome which has doomed many good approaches to our educational problems.

4. New techniques and measures should be developed for adequate evaluation of community controlled school projects. Traditional stress on achievement tests fails to measure the many changes in attitude at student, parent and community levels that are occurring due to the radically different structures of these schools.

5. A group controlled by the community schools themselves (such as the National Association of Community Schools) should be supported to allow the exchange of information, ideas and plans among the widely separated community controlled school projects.

Appendix A

Sources of Information

The visits to projects which form the basis for most information in this paper were supported by the Institute for Community Studies at Queens College. I was accompanied on most visits by two staff members of the Institute: Trevor Walker and Lorraine Maxwell. Length of the visits varied according to local arrangements. In most cases, we were able to stay a couple of days and add detailed information and observations to previous knowledge gathered by others. My prior work with and visits to Follow Through funded schools was an additional source of direct information. In a few cases, much on-site time was spent trying to locate a small school—leaving little or no time to visit classes or talk with a variety of parents, community residents, staff and students. As indicated in Chart A, a few projects were not visited.

Types of Contacts

Chart A presents the types of contacts made for each project. Although the majority of these contacts were made on trips to schools between January and May, 1969, some background information on Follow Through projects was collected during the summer of 1968. Gaps in my knowledge of some projects were filled by visits and discussions in late 1969 and early 1970. The length of the contacts with each person varied from one meeting for a few minutes in a few instances, to lengthy visits repeated over a period of a year and a half. Information gathered from other sources is reported in footnotes. Each project was asked to update the first draft of the descriptions printed in this booklet. The draft was sent in March 1970 to a minimum of one staff person (usually the director, principal or superintendent) and one community person or parent (usually the board chairman). Reactions in writing or by phone were received from at least one source in every project.

A draft of a chart summarizing basic characteristics of each project was also sent to each project for corrections and updating. No other questionnaire was used. Although an extensive report outline was developed before the bulk of the visits, it was utilized as a general guide for determining important characteristics and major emphasis of projects rather than a strict point-by-point measuring device.

The strength of this report lies in the extensive and varied contacts made over an extended period of time. The impressions gathered lend themselves to broad generalization and tentative hypotheses—not to firm conclusions. The observations are mostly qualitative rather than quantative. The report is suggestive of fruitful areas for further exploration and evaluation. The tone is generally optimistic—for I have found much in the community control movement that represents the best in life: enthusiastic people gaining confidence in their own abilities to make a better life for their children.

CHART A:

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Projects:	Site visit	CONTACTS MADE WITH: Director, Principal or Superintendent	Board chairman or member	Parent/Community residents	Community workers or "aides"*	Teachers	Students	Government or Foundation Program officer	Attended board meeting	Visited classes	Received updating/reaction to first draft by phone or letter
I. S. 201	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
Sayre	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Ocean-Hill Brownsville	X	X	X	X				X	X		X
Rough Rock	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Two Bridges	X	X	X	X		X		X	X		X
Springfield Avenue	X	X	X	X				X		X	X
Dayton**	X	X									X
Morgan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
WESP		X	X	X	X			X			X
CCED	X	X	X	X				X	X		X
Eastern H. S.	X	X	X			X	X				X
Anacostia	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X
E. St. Louis		X	X	X				X			X
Pulaski County	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Greeley	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Flint								X			X
E. Harlem Block	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Children's Community	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X
Roxbury Community	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
New School	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X
Highland Park	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X
Martin L. King, Jr.	X	X	X	X		X					X
Malcolm X		X	X	X		X					X
Milwaukee (4 Schools)	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
Inkster	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Edgewood	X		X								X
E. Palto Alto	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X

*In some cases these parents, residents and workers were also Board members.

**Site visit was made by Trevor Walker only.

Appendix A
More Community School Information

A. If You Have More Information

This description of community schools is necessarily outdated before it comes to print. New schools and programs are being created every month; programs described here are being reshaped by new ideas and concerns. I am already aware of a half dozen additional schools which I have been unable to visit and adequately describe.

In order to create a clearing house of up-to-date community school information, people with information should write to:

The National Association of Community Schools
c/o National Bar Foundation
1707 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

B. If You Need More Information

In addition to requesting information from the National Association of Community Schools (see address above) and the Institute for Community Studies, you may wish to write directly to the schools described herein (listed alphabetically):

Anacostia Community School Project
2250 Railroad Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20020

The Children's Community Workshop
55 West 88th Street
New York, New York

Committee for Community Education Development (CCED)
c/o Hecht House
American Legion Highway
Roxbury, Massachusetts

The Day School (discussed under Ravenswood District)
c/o Brenton Wood School
East Palo Alto, California

Dayton Model Cities Community School Council
1158½ West Third Street
Dayton, Ohio 45407

East Harlem Block Schools
94 East 111th Street
New York, New York 10029

77

East St. Louis Follow Through Project
c/o East St. Louis Public Schools
1620 Illinois Avenue
East St. Louis, Illinois 62205

Eastern High School Freedom Annex
907 Maryland Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Edgewood Independent School District
San Antonio, Texas

Flint Follow Through Project
c/o The Flint Public Schools
Flint, Michigan 48505

Greeley Follow Through Project
School Administration Building
811 — 15th Avenue
Greeley, Colorado

The Highland Park Free School
42 Hawthorne Street
Roxbury, Massachusetts 02119

I.S. 201 Community School District
103 East 125th Street
New York, New York

Inkster City Schools
29115 Carlyle Avenue
Inkster, Michigan

The Malcolm X School
1640 O'Farrell Street
San Francisco, California

Milwaukee Federation of Independent Community Schools
2637 North 11th Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201

The Boniface Community School
Bruce-Guadalupe Community School
The Francis Community School
Martin Luther King, Jr., Community School
(Three more schools were added by October, 1970:
Harambee Community School, Leo Community School, Michael's Community School)

78

The Morgan Community School
1773 California Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

The New School for Children
6 Bradshaw Street
Roxbury, Massachusetts

Pulaski County Follow Through Project
College Station Elementary School
P.O. Box 197
Geneva, Arkansas 72053

Ravenswood Elementary School District
East Palo Alto, California

Rough Rock Demonstration School
Chinle, Arizona

The Roxbury Community School
1 Leyland Street
Dorchester, Massachusetts

Sayre Junior High School Community Committee
59th and Walnut Streets
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Springfield Avenue Community School
517 Springfield Avenue
Newark, New Jersey

The Woodlawn Experimental Schools Project
6253 South Woodlawn
Chicago, Illinois

Note: No addresses are given for Ocean Hill-Brownsville and Two Bridges Districts which were discontinued by action of the New York State Legislature. The Martin King, Jr. School in San Francisco has also closed (information about M. L. King School can be obtained by writing to the Malcolm X School).